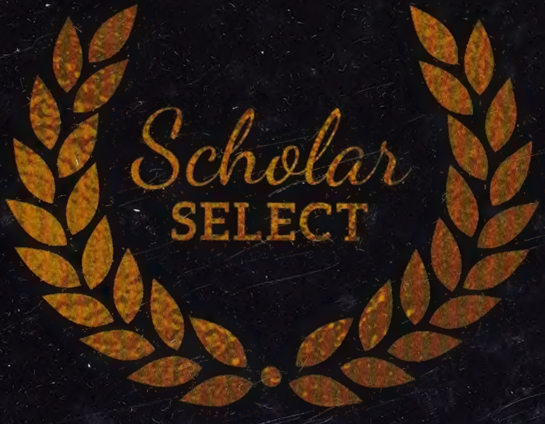
A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity; Or, a System of Evangelical Truths, Deduced From the Sacred Scriptures



JOHN GILL

A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity; Or, a System of Evangelical Truths, Deduced From the Sacred Scriptures

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A

COMPLETE BODY

OF

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL

DIVINITY;

OR,

A SYSTEM OF

EVANGELICAL TRUTHS,

DEDUCED FROM THE

SACRED SCRIPTURES.

BY JOHN GILL, D. D.

A New Edition.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Edition of Dr. Gill's Body of Divinity was undertaken at the desire of several evangelical Ministers, in the establishment, and amongst the Dissenters, who were desirous of again bringing before the Public a Work—which enters into—fully explains—and ably defends the whole system of evangelical truth—a Work in which the opinions of the Ancient Fathers and Churches on all the principles, doctrines, and duties of Christianity are critically examined and candidly stated, as are likewise the opinions of the most celebrated Philosophers, who have been the opponents of Divine Revelation.

The high estimation in which this work has been, and still is, held by the friends of vital Religion, may be inferred from the numerous Subscribers to the Quarto Edition, (*among whom* are the most learned and judicious advocates for Christianity) and from the avidity with which Copies of that Edition have been sought after, notwithstanding the high price they have borne.

This Edition is, therefore, recommended to the Friend as well as to the Opponent of Evangelical Truth; it containing every argument that can be brought forward in support of, or in opposition to, the doctrine that holds forth to Man, Salvation through the mediation and atonement of Jesus Christ. —— That it may be a means in the hands of Providence of promoting the cause of truth and holiness, and of establishing the professing Christian in the doctrines and duties of the Gospel of Jesus, is the sincere wish of

THE EDITOR.

STATE SIDE OF NEWGATE,
NOV. 5th, 1795.

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INTRODUCTION.

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION.

HAVING completed an exposition of the whole bible, the Books both of the Old and of the New Testament; I considered with myself what would be best next to engage in for the further instruction of the people under my care; and my thoughts led me to enter upon a scheme of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, first the former and then the latter; the one being the foundation of the other, and both having a close connexion with each other. Doctrine has an influence upon practice, especially evangelical doctrine, spiritually understood, affectionately embraced, and powerfully and feelingly experienced; so true is what the apostle asserts, that the *grace of God*, that is, the doctrine of the grace of God, *that bringeth salvation*, the good news, the glad tidings of salvation by Christ, which is peculiar to gospel doctrine, *hath appeared to all men*, Gentiles as well as Jews, in the external ministry of the word; *teaching us*, to whom it comes with power and efficacy in the demonstration of the Spirit, *that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*. Where there is not the doctrine of faith, the obedience of faith cannot be expected. Where there is not the doctrine of the gospel, and men have not learned Christ, they live for the most part as if there was no God in the world, and give themselves up to work all sin with greediness. And on the other hand, doctrine without practice, or a mere theory and speculative knowledge of things, unless reduced to practice, is of no avail; such are only vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, profess to know God in word, but in works deny him, have a form of godliness without the power of it, a name to live but are dead. Doctrine and practice should go together; and in order both to know and do the will of God, instruction in doctrine and practice is necessary; and the one being first taught will lead on to the other. This method of instruction, the apostle Paul has pointed out to us in some of his epistles, especially in the epistle to the Ephesians; in which he first treats of election, predestination, adoption, acceptance in Christ, redemption and pardon of sin, regeneration and other doctrines of grace, and of the privileges of the saints under the gospel-dispensation; and then inforces the several duties incumbent on them as men and Christians, respecting them in their several stations, in the church, in their families, and in the world. So the apostle instructed Timothy, first to teach the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, the doctrine that is according to godliness and productive of it, and then to exhort and press men to the duties of religion from evangelical motives and principles. And he also enjoined Titus to affirm the doctrines of the gospel with constancy and certainty, to this end, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.

And now having finished my scheme of Doctrinal Divinity, at the importunity of my friends I have been prevailed upon to publish it

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Systematical Divinity, I am sensible, is now become very unpopular. Formulas and articles of faith, creeds, confessions, catechisms, and summaries of divine truths, are greatly decried in our age; and yet, what art or science soever but has been reduced to a system? physic, metaphysic, logic, rhetoric, &c. Philosophy in general has had its several systems; not to take notice of the various sects and systems of philosophy in ancient times; in the last age, the Cartesian system of philosophy greatly obtained, as the Newtonian system now does. Astronomy in particular has been considered as a system: sometimes called the system of the universe, and sometimes the solar, or planetary system: the first that is known is what was brought by Pythagoras into Greece and Italy, and from him called the Pythagorean system; and which was followed by many of the first and ancient philosophers, though for many years it lay neglected; but has been of late ages revived, and now much in vogue: the next is the Ptolemaic system, advanced by Ptolemy; which places the earth in the center of the universe; and makes the heavens, with the sun, moon, and stars, to revolve about it; and which was universally embraced for many hundreds of years, till the Pythagorean system was revived by Copernicus, two or three hundred years ago, called, from him, the Copernican system. In short, medicine, jurisprudence, or law, and every art and science, are reduced to a system or body; which is no other than an assemblage or composition of the several doctrines or parts of a science; and why ſhould divinity, the most noble science, be without a system? Evangelical truths are spread and scattered about in the sacred Scriptures; and to gather them together, and dispose of them in a regular, orderly method, surely cannot be disagreeable; but must be useful, for the more clear and perspicuous understanding them, for the better retaining them in memory, and to shew the connection, harmony, and agreement of them. Accordingly we find that Christian writers, in ancient times, attempted something of this nature; as the several formulas of faith, symbols or creeds, made in the first three or four centuries of Christianity; the Stromata of Clemens of Alexandria; the four books of Principles, by Origen; the divine Institutions of Lactantius; the large Catechism of Gregory Nyssene; the Theology of Gregory Nazianzen; the Exposition of the Apostles Symbol, by Ruffinus; and the Enchiridion of Austin, with many others that followed: and since the Reformation, we have had bodies or systems of divinity, and confessions of faith, better digested, and drawn up with greater accuracy and consistence; and which have been very serviceable to lead men into the knowledge of evangelical doctrine, and confirm them in it; as well as to shew the agreement and harmony of sound divines and churches, in the more principal parts of it: and even those who now cry out against systems, confessions, and creeds, their predecessors had those of their own; Arius had his creed; and the Socinians have their catechism, the Racovian catechism; and the Remonstrants have published their confession of faith; not to take notice of the several bodies of divinity published by Episcopius, Limborch, Curcellæus, and others. The Jews, in imitation of the Christians, have reduced their theology to certain heads, or articles of faith; the chief, if not the first that took this method, was the famous Maimonides, who comprised their religious tenets in thirteen articles; after him R. Joseph Albo reduced them to three classes, the existence of God, the law of Moses, and the doctrine of rewards and punishments.

Maimonides
Joseph Albo
Jewish Creeds

But what makes most for our purpose, and is worthy of our example, are the Scripture compendiums or systems of doctrine and duty. What a compendium or body of laws is the decalogue or ten commands, drawn up and calculated more especially for the use of the Jews, and suited to their circumstances! a body of laws not to be equalled by the wisest legislators of Greece and Rome, Minos, Lycurgus, Zaleucus, and Numa; nor by the laws of the twelve Roman tables, for order and regularity, for clearness and perspicuity, for comprehensiveness and brevity; being divided into two tables in the most perfect order; the first respecting the worship of God and the duties owing to him, and the other respecting men and the mutual duties they owe to each other. As prayer is a very principal and incumbent duty on men with respect to God, our Lord has given a very compendious directory, as to the matter of it, in what is commonly called the Lord's prayer; which consists of petitions the most full, proper, and pertinent, and in the most regular order. And as to articles of faith or things to be believed, we have a creed made mention of in Heb. vi. 1, 2. consisting of six articles, repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. These are commonly thought to be so many articles of the Christian faith; but I rather think they are so many articles of the Jewish creed, embraced and professed by believers under the Jewish dispensation; since the Christian Hebrews are directed to consider them as the principles of the doctrine of Christ, as an introduction, and as leading on to it, and which were in some sense to be left and not laid again; they were not to stick and stop here, but to go on to perfection, by searching into and embracing doctrines more sublime and perfect, revealed in the gospel; at least they were not to be any longer instructed in the above articles in the manner they had been, but in a clearer manner, unattended with legal ceremonies, to view them and make use of them. Thus for instance, they, the believers, Christian Hebrews, were not to learn the doctrine of repentance from slain beasts, or to signify it by them, as they had been used to do; for every sacrifice brought for sin, which they were no longer obliged to; was a tacit confession and an acknowledgment of sin, and that they repented of it, and deserved to die as the creature did; but now they were to exercise evangelical repentance in the view of a crucified Christ, and remission of sin by his blood: and whereas they had been taught to have faith towards God, as the God of Israel, they were now moreover to believe in Christ as the Son of God, the true Messiah, the Saviour of lost sinners, without the intervention of sacrifices, see John xiv. 1. The doctrine of baptisms is to be understood of the divers baptisms, or bathings among the Jews, spoken of in Heb. ix. 10, which had a doctrine in them, teaching the cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ to wash in for sin and for uncleanness; which they were no more to learn in this way, but to apply immediately to the blood of Christ for it. And the doctrine of laying on of hands, respects the laying on of the hands of the priests and people on the heads of the sacrifices, which instructed in that great and evangelical truth, the transfer and imputation of sin to Christ offered up in the room and stead of his people; and which was to be taught and learnt no longer in that manner, since Christ was now made sin for his people, and had had their sins imputed to him, which he had bore in his own body on the tree: and as for the doctrines of the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, they were such as distinguished Jews and Gentiles, which latter were greatly strangers to a future state; and though they were common to Jews and Christians, yet the believing Hebrews were not to rest in the knowledge they had of these, as enjoyed under the former dispensation; but to go on to perfection; and to press forward towards a greater share of knowledge of them and of other more sublime doctrines; since life and immortality were brought to life by Christ in a clearer and brighter manner through the gospel. But all that I mean by this is, that the principal doctrines of faith under the Jewish dispensation are reduced to a system, though to be improved and perfected under the gospel dispensation. Those articles were but few; though Gregory[a] observes, that according to the increase of times, the knowledge of saints increased, and the nearer they were to the coming of the Saviour, the more fully they perceived the mysteries of salvation: and so the articles in the formulas and symbols of the first Christians were but few, suitable to the times in which they lived, and as opposite to the errors then broached; and which were increased by new errors that sprung up, which made an increase of articles necessary; otherwise the same articles of faith were believed by the ancients as by the later posterity, as Aquinas concludes[b]: "Articles of faith, says he, have increased by succession of times, not indeed as to the substance, but as to the explanation and express profession of them; for what are explicitly and under a greater number believed by posterity, all the same were believed by the fathers before them, implicitly under a lesser number." It is easy to observe, that the first summaries of faith recorded by the most ancient writers went no farther than the doctrine of the Trinity, or what concerns the three Divine Persons; the doctrines of the heretics of the first ages being opposed to one or other of them: but when other heresies sprung up and other false doctrines were taught, it became necessary to add new articles, both to explain, defend, and secure truth, and to distinguish those who were sound in the faith of the gospel, from those that were not.

Mention is made in the New Testament of a form of doctrine delivered, and a form of sound words that had been heard and was to be held fast, and of a proportion or analogy of faith, according to which ministers were to prophesy or preach; the first of these is spoken of in Rom. vi. 17. *But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, &c.* which is not to be understood of the Scriptures or written word delivered unto them; but of the gospel and the doctrines of it preached by the apostle in the ministry of the word to the Romans, which they had yielded the obedience of faith unto, and which was τυπος, a type or pattern, as the word is rendered Heb. viii. 5. and an example, 1 Tim. iv. 12. according to which they were to conform their faith and practice; and which in the next place referred to, 2 Tim. i. 13. is called υποτυπωσις, translated a pattern, 1 Ep. i. 16. a form exactly expressed, always to be had in view, to be attended to, and followed; and a delineation, such as a picture or the outlines of a portrait given by painters to their learners, always to be looked unto and imitated; and such a form the apostle proposed to Timothy, carefully to respect and give information of to others as a rule of faith

[a] Homil. 16. in Ezek. apud Aquin.

[b] Summa Theolog. Sec. sec. qu. 1. artic. 7.

and practice[c]; which cannot be understood of the Scriptures, though of what is agreeable to them; since it is what Timothy had heard of the apostle, either in his private conversation, or in his public ministry, even a sett of gospel-doctrines collected out of the Scriptures and confirmed by them, reduced into a system; and thus the apostle himself reduces his ministry to these two heads, *repentance towards God*, and *faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts xx. 21. And a rich summary and glorious compendium and chain of gospel-truths does he deliver, Rom. viii. 30. worthy, as a form and pattern, to gospel-ministers to attend unto, and according to it to regulate their ministrations. Once more, the apostle speaks of a proportion or an analogy of faith, Rom. xii. 6. *Whether prophesy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith*; by which faith Calvin, on the text observes, are meant the first axioms of religion, to which whatsoever doctrines is not found to answer is convicted of falshood. And so Piscator, upon the words; according to the analogy of faith, that is, so as that the interpretation of Scripture we bring is analogous to the articles of faith, that is, agreeing with them and consenting to them, and not repugnant: and Paræus on the text is more express; "analogy, he says, is not the same as measure (ver. 3.) for measure is of one thing measured, but analogy is between two things that are analogous; but the apostle seems to describe something more, namely, to prescribe a rule by which all prophesying is to be directed; therefore by faith others understand the rule of Scripture and the axioms of faith such as are comprehended in the symbol of the apostolic faith (or the apostle's creed) which have in them a manifest truth from the Scriptures. Analogy is the evident harmony of faith and consent of the heads (or articles) of faith, to which whatever agrees is true, and whatever disagrees is false and adulterate. This is the rule of all prophesying (or preaching;) therefore, according to the rule of the sacred Scripture and the apostle's creed, all interpretations, disputations, questions and opinions in the church, are to be examined, that they may be conformable thereunto." And though what is now called the apostles creed might not be composed by them, nor so early as their time; yet the substance of it was agreeable to their doctrine, and therefore called theirs; and there was a *regula fidei*, a rule of faith, very near it in words, received, embraced, and professed very early in the Christian church; which Tertullian[d] gives in these words, "the rule of faith is truly one, solely immoveable and irreformable (not to be corrected and mended) namely, of believing in the only God Almighty, the maker of the world, and in his son Jesus Christ, born of the virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised from the dead on the third day, received into heaven, sitting now at the right hand of the Father, who will come to judge the quick and dead by or at the resurrection of the dead." And such a sett of principles these, as, or what are similar to them and accord with the word of God, may be called the analogy of faith. And a late writer [*] observes on the word analogy; "The analogy of faith our divines call the sum of heavenly doctrine concerning articles of faith, taken out of such passages of Scripture, where, as in their proper place, they are treated of in clear and plain words." Upon the whole, it seems no ways incongruous with the sacred writings but perfectly agreeable to them, that articles and heads of faith, or a summary of gospel-truths may be collected from them, to declare explicitly our belief of them, to strengthen the faith of others in them, to shew our agreement in them with other Christians in the principal parts of them, and to distinguish ourselves from those who oppose the faith once delivered to the saints.

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[c] Calvin on the passage has these words, "the apostle seems to me to command Timothy that he be tenacious of the doctrine he had learned, not only as to the substance, but as to the figure of the oration, (or form of speech or sett of words used) for υποτυπωσις, the word used, is a lively expression of things as if presented to the eye; Paul knew how easy is a lapse or deflection from the pure doctrine, and therefore solicitously cautioned Timothy not to decline from the form of teaching he had received."

[d] De virgin. veland. c. 1. vid. præscript. hæret. c. 13.

It is strongly pleaded that articles and confessions of faith, in which men are to agree, should be expressed in the bare words of the sacred Scriptures, and that nothing should be considered as a fundamental article that is matter of controversy: as to the latter, if that was admitted, there would be scarce any article at all left us to believe; for what is there almost that is believed, but what is controverted by some, nor any passage of Scripture brought in support of it, but the sense of it is called in question, or perverted? for as Clemens of Alexandria says, "I do not think there is any Scripture so happy as to be contradicted by none." As to the former, that we are to be tied up to the bare words of Scripture concerning any doctrine of faith delivered in them; though we ought to entertain the highest esteem of the words of Scripture, and have the greatest value for them, as being clothed with such majesty, and having such an energy in them, which the words that man's wisdom teacheth, have not; yet our sense of them cannot be expressed but in words literally varying from them: and it should be settled what is meant by bare words of Scripture, whether of the original text Hebrew and Greek, or of any translation, as English, &c. if the words of a translation, a man cannot be sure that this always does express the sense of Scripture, especially in passages difficult and controverted; if of the original, then both he that makes the confession, and they to whom it is made, ought to understand Hebrew and Greek; and even every member of a church where a confession of faith is required in order to communion; and if this is to be made in the bare words of Scripture be it in the words of a translation, without an explanation of their sense of them in other words, it might introduce into a Christian community all sorts of errors that can be named, which would be utterly inconsistent with its peace, concord, harmony, and union: moreover, to be obliged to express ourselves only in the words of Scripture, would be, 1. to destroy all exposition and interpretation of Scripture; for without words different from, though agreeable to, the sacred Scriptures, we can never express our sense of them, nor explain them to others according to the sense we have entertained of them; and though no Scripture is of private interpretation, or a man's own interpretation, so as to be obliging on others, yet by this means it will become of no interpretation at all, private or public, of a man's own or of others. It is indeed sometimes said that Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture, and which in some respects is true; as when for the better understanding of a passage of Scripture another more clear and explicit is set unto it and compared with it, and which serves to throw light on it, and give a clearer discernment of it, and of its true sense; but then that light, discernment, and sense, cannot be expressed but in words literally different from them both.—2. To be obliged to express ourselves about divine things in the bare words of Scripture, must tend to make the ministry and preaching of the word in a great measure useless; for then a minister of the word would have nothing else to do but to repeat or read some select passages of Scripture relating to any particular subject, or collect a string of them, which refer to the same subject, and deliver them without attempting any illustration of them, or making use of any reasonings from them, to explain or strengthen any point of doctrine contained in them; so that the people in common may as well in a manner stay at home and read the Scriptures in their private houses, as to attend on public ministrations. Surely the apostle Paul, "when he reasoned out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom he preached was Christ," Acts xvii. 2, 3. must in these his reasonings, explanations, and allegations, use his own words; which, though they accorded with the Scriptures, must literally vary from them out of which he reasoned, and by which he elucidated and confirmed his arguments concerning the messiahship of Jesus, his suffering of death, and resurrection from the dead: and though he said no other as to substance than what Moses and the prophets said concerning Christ, yet in words different from theirs. According to this scheme all public ministrations must be at an end, as well as all writing in defence of truth and for the confutation of errors, yea,—3. This must in a great measure cramp all religious conversation about divine things, if not destroy it. To what purpose is it for them that fear God to meet frequently and speak often one to another about the things of God and truths of the gospel, if they are not to make use of their own words, to express their sense of these things by them? and how in this way can their Christian conferences be to mutual edification? how can they build up one another in their most holy faith? how can weaker and less experienced Christians receive any advantage from more knowing and stronger ones, if only they are to declare their sense of things in the bare words of Scripture?—4. Indeed, as Dr Owen says [f], if this is the case, as it would be unlawful to speak or write otherwise than in the words of Scripture, so it would be unlawful to think or conceive in the mind any other than what the Scripture expresses: the whole of what he says on this subject is worth repeating "To deny the liberty, yea the necessity hereof (that is, of making use of such words and expressions, as it may be, are not literally and formally contained in Scripture, but only are unto our conceptions and apprehensions expository of what is so contained) is to deny all interpretation of the Scripture, all endeavours to express the sense of the words of it unto the understandings of one another, which is, in a word, to render the Scripture itself altogether useless; if it is unlawful for me to speak or write what I conceive to be the sense of the words of Scripture and the nature of the thing signified and expressed by them, it is unlawful for me also to think or conceive in my mind what is the sense of the words or nature of the things; which to say is to make brutes of ourselves, and to frustrate the whole design of God in giving unto us the great privilege of his word."—5. In this way, the sentiments of one man in any point of religion cannot be distinguished from those of another, though diametrically opposite; so an Arian cannot be known from an Athanasian; both will say in the words of Scripture, that Christ is the *great God*, the *true God*, and *over all God blessed for ever*; but without expressing themselves in their own words, their different sentiments will not be discerned; the one holding that Christ is a created God, of a like but not of the same substance with his Father; the other that he is equal with him, of the same nature, substance, and glory: and he that believes the latter, surely it cannot be unlawful to express his belief of it in such words which declare the true sense of his mind. So a Sabellian or Unitarian and a Trinitarian, will neither of them scruple to say in Scripture-terms what Christ says of himself and his Father, *I and my Father are one*; and yet the former holds, they are one in person or but one person; whereas the latter affirms, that they are one in nature and essence, but two distinct persons; and surely it must be lawful so to express himself, if this is the real sentiment of his mind. A Socinian and an Anti-socinian will join in saying Christ the *Word is God*, and that he is the *only begotten of the Father*, and the *only begotten Son of God*; and yet the one maintains that he is only God by office, not by nature, and that he is the only begotten son of God by office or by adoption; when the other believes that Christ is God by nature, and that he is the Son of the Father by natural and eternal generation, being begotten by him. It is necessary therefore they should make use of their own words to express their sentiments by, or how otherwise should it be known that they differ from one another? and indeed this seems to be the grand reason why it is urged with so much vehemence, by some, that only Scripture words and phrases should be made use of, that their erroneous tenets may not be detected and exposed; for as a learned man has observed[a], such as cavil at the formulas (of sound doctrine used by the orthodox) and plead they should be very short, and composed in the bare words of Scripture, *eos aliquid monſtri alere*, these nourish and cherish some monstrous notion, as the experience of all ages testify. And sometimes such persons take detached passages of Scripture from different places, and join them together, though they have no connexion and agreement with each other; and such a method Irenæus[b] observes the ancient heretics took, who made use of passages of Scripture, "that their figments might not seem to be without a testimony; but passed over the order and connection of the Scriptures, and loosened the parts of truth as much as in them lay;" and who fitly compares such to one who should take the effigy of a king made of jewels and precious stones by a skilful artificer, and loosen and separate them, and of them make the form of a dog or a fox.—6. It does not appear that those men, who are so strenuous for the use of Scripture-phrases only in articles of religion, have a greater value for the Scriptures than others; nay, not so much; for if we are to form a judgment of them by their sermons and writings, one would think they never read the Scriptures at all, or very little, since they make such an infrequent use of them: you shall scarcely hear a passage of Scripture quoted by them in a sermon, or produced by them in their writings; more frequently Seneca, Cicero, and others; and it looks as if they thought it very unpolite, and what might serve to disgrace their more refined writings, to fill their performances with them: and after all, it is easy to observe that these men, as the Arians formerly, and the Socinians more lately, carry on their cause, and endeavour to support it by making use of unscriptural words and phrases; and therefore it is not with a very good grace that such men, or those of the same cast with them, object to the use of words and phrases not syllabically expressed in Scripture; and the rather, since the Arians were the first that began to make use of unscriptural phrases, as Athanasius affirms[i]. The Athanasians had as good a right to use the word ομουσιος as the Arians ομοιουσιος, and thereby explain their sense and defend their doctrine concerning the person of Christ, and his equality with God, against the latter, who introduced a phrase subversive of it; and the Calvinists have as good authority to make use of the word satisfaction in the doctrine of expiation of sin and atonement for it, as the Socinians and Remonstrants have for the use of the word acceptilation, whereby they seek to obscure and weaken it. Words and phrases, though not literally expressed in Scripture, yet if what is meant by them is to be found there, they may be lawfully made use of; as some respecting the doctrine of the Trinity; of these some are plainly expressed, which are used in treating of that doctrine, as *nature*, Gal. iv. 8. *Godhead*, Col. ii. 9. *Person*, the person of the Father, and the person of Christ, Heb. i. 3. 2 Cor. ii. 10. and iv. 6. and others clearly signified, as essence, by the name of God, *I am what I am*, Exod. iii. 14. the unity or divine persons in it, John x. 30. a *Trinity* of persons in the unity of essence, 1 John v. 7. the *generation* of the Son by and of the Father, Ps. ii. 7. John i. 14, 18. and others respecting some peculiar doctrines of revelation, concerning the state of men and the grace of Christ; as *the imputation of Adam's sin* to his posterity, Rom. v. 19. and the *imputation of righteousness*, i. e. of Christ's to them that believe, which is nearly syllabically expressed in Rom. iv. 6. and the *imputation* of sin to Christ, who *was made sin*, i. e. by imputation, 2 Cor. v. 21. And the satisfaction of Christ for sin, in all those places where it is signified that what Christ has done and suffered in the room and stead of his people is to the content of law and juſtice, and God is well pleased with it: and these are the principal words and phrases objected to, and which we shall not be prevailed upon to part with easily. And indeed, words and phrases, the use of which have long obtained in the churches of Christ, and the sense of them is well known, and serve aptly to convey the sense of those that use them; it is unreasonable to require them to part with them, unless others, and those better words and phrases, are substituted in their room; and such as are proposed should not be easily admitted without strict examination; for there is oftentimes a good deal of truth in that saying, *qui fingit nova verba, nova gignit dogmata*; he that coins new words, coins new doctrines; which is notorious in the case of Arius; for not only Alexander[k], his bishop, charged him with saying, without Scripture, and what was never said before, that God was not always a father, but there was a time when he was not a father; and that the Word was not always,

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[*] Analogiam fidei nostrates dicunt summam cœlestis doctrinæ de articulis fidei e talibus scripturæ petitam locis, ubi claris & perspicuis verbis ac, seu in propria sede, de iis agitur, Stockii Clavis Ling. s. Nov. Teſt. p. 617.

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[f] The doctrine of the Trinity vindicated, p. 81.

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[a] Witsius in Symbol. Exercitat. 2. s. 21. p. 21.

[b] Adv. Hæres. l. 1. c. 1. p. 33.

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[i] Synod. Nicen. contr. haeres. Arian. decret. p. 417.

[k] Apud Socrat, Hist. l. 2. c. 6. vid. Sozomen. Hist. l. 1. c. 15.

but was made out of things that were not; and that there was a time when he was not a son: but Eusebius[l], a favourer of his, also owns that the inspired writings never used such phrases, τὸ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, καὶ τὸ, ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, that Christ was from non-entities, from things that are not, i. e. was made out of nothing; and that there was a time when he was not; phrases, he says, they had never been used to.

The subject of the following pages being theology, or what we call divinity, it may be proper to consider the signification and use of the word, and from whence it has its rise. I say, what we call divinity; for it seems to be a word, as to the use of it in this subject, peculiar to us; foreign writers never entitle their works of this kind, *corpus* vel *ſyſtema* vel *medulla divinitatis*, a body or system, or marrow of divinity, but *corpus* vel *ſyſtema* vel *medulla theologiæ*, a body or system or marrow of theology. The word *divinitas*, from whence our word divinity comes, is only used by Latin writers for deity or godhead; but since custom and use have long fixed the sense of the word among us, to signify, when used on this subject, a treatise on the science of divine things, sacred truths, and Christian doctrines, taken out of the Scriptures; we need not scruple the use of it. The Jews seem to come nearest to us in the phrase which they use concerning it, calling it[m], חכמת האלהות vel האלהית a science of divinity, or a divine science; that is, a science or doctrine concerning divine things; concerning God; concerning his divinity and things belonging to him; and which, in the main, is the same as to sense with the word theology, as will be seen hereafter; and here, before we proceed any further, it may not be improper to observe, the distinction of the Jewish theology, or the two parts into which they divide it. The first they call מעשה בראשית the work of Bereshith or the creation; for Bereshith being the first word of Gen. i. 1. *In the beginning God created*, they frequently use it to signify the whole work of the creation; so that this part of their theology respects the creatures God has made, and the nature of them; whereby the invisible things of God, as the apostle says, are discerned, even his eternal power and godhead; and this is their physics or natural Theology. The other branch is called מעשה מרכבה the work of the chariot[n], which appellation is taken from the vision in Ezek. i. of the four living creatures in the form of a chariot, which is the more abstruse and mysterious part of their theology; and may be called their metaphysics or supernatural theology; and which treats of God, and of his divine attributes; of the Messiah; of angels, and the souls of men; as in the book of Zohar, and other cabalistic writings. But to go on.

Theology is a Greek word, and signifies a discourse concerning God and things belonging to him; it was first in use among the heathen poets and philosophers, and so the word theologue. Lactantius says[o], the most ancient writers of Greece were called Theologues; these were their poets who wrote of their deities, and of the genealogies of them; Pherecydes is said to be the first that wrote of divine things; so Thales says[p], in his letter to him, hence he had the name of Theologue[q]; though some make Museus, the son of Eumolphus, the first of this sort[r]; others give the title to Orpheus. Pythagoras, the disciple of Pherecydes, has also this character;

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[l] Apud Theodoret. Hist. l. 1. c. 12. [m] Vid. Buxtorf. Talmud. Lex. Col. 751. [n] Vid. Maimon. præfat. ad More Nevochim, par. 1. [o] De Ira c. 11. [p] Apud Laert l. 1. in vita ejus. [q] Ib. in vita Pherecydis. [r] Ib. Proœm.

and Porphyry[s], by way of eminence, calls him the Theologue; and who often in his writings speaks of the Theologues[t]; and this character was given to Plato; also Aristotle[u] makes mention of the Theologues, as distinct from naturalists, or the natural philosophers; Cicero[v] also speaks of them, and seems to design by them the poets, or the authors of mystic theology. The Egyptians had their theology[w], which they communicated to Darius, the father of Xerxes; and so had the magi and the Chaldeans; of whom Democritus is said to learn theology and astrology[x]. The priests of Delphos, are called by Plutarch[y], the Theologues of Delphos. It is from hence now that these words Theology and Theologues have been borrowed, and made use of by Christian writers; and I see no impropriety in the use of them; nor should they be thought the worse for their original, no more than other words which come from the same source; for though these words are used of false deities, and of persons that treat of them; it follows not but that they may be used, with great propriety, of discourses concerning the true God, and things belonging to him, and of those that discourse of them. The first among Christians that has the title of Theologue, or Divine, is St. John, the writer of the book of the Revelation; for so the inscription of the book runs, "the Revelation of St. John the Divine." In the Complutensian edition, and so in the King of Spain's Bible, it is, "the Revelation of the holy Apostle and Evangelist, John the Divine." Whether this word Theologue, or Divine, was originally in the inscription of this book, I will not say; but this may be said, that Origen[z], a very early Christian writer, gives to John the title of the Divine, as it should seem from hence; and Athanasius[a], in his account of the sacred writings, calls the book of the Revelation, "the Revelation of John the Divine;" and who also stiles him "John the Evangelist and Divine." These words Theologue and Theology are to be met with frequently in the ancient fathers, in following ages, and in all ages, and in all Christian writers to the present times. Upon the whole, it appears that Theology, or Divinity, as we call it, is no other than a science or doctrine concerning God, or a discoursing and treating of things relating to him; and that a Theologue, or a Divine, is one that understands, discourses, and treats of divine things; and perhaps the Evangelist John might have this title eminently given to him by the ancients, because of his writing concerning, and the record he bore to Christ, the λογος, the essential Word of God, to his proper Deity, divine Sonship, and distinct personality. Suidas[b] not only calls him the Divine and the Evangelist, but says, that he wrote theology; by which he seems to mean the book of the Revelation, which book some have observed contains a complete body of Divinity. Here we are taught the divine authority and excellency of the sacred Scriptures; that there is but one God, and that he only is to be worshipped, and not angels; that God is the Triune God; that there are three Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that God is eternal, the Creator, and Preserver of all things; that Christ is truly God and truly man; that he is prophet, priest, and king; that men are by nature wretched, blind, naked, poor, and miserable; that some of all nations are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; and that they are justified and washed from their sins in his blood; the articles of the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, the sad estate of the wicked, and the happiness of the saints, may be observed in it.

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[s] De Abstinentia, l. 2. c. 36. & de antro Nympharum.

[t] De Abstinentia, l. 2. s. 43, 44. 47. et de antro Nympharum.

[u] Metaphysic. l. 12. c. 6. 10.

[v] De Divinatione, l. 3. c. 25. vid. Plato de Repub. l. 2. p. 609.

[w] Diodorus Sic. l. 1. p. 85.

[x] Laert. l. 9. in vita ejus.

[y] De defect. Orac. p. 417. vid. ib. 410, 436.

[z] Homil. 2. in Evangel. Joan. t. 5.

[a] Synops. s. Script. p. 65, 132.

[b] In voce Ἰωάννης & in voce Νόννος.

And as we are upon this subject, it may not be amiss if we take a brief compendious view of the sate of theology; or, if you please, divinity, from the beginning of it to the present time. Theology may be considered either as natural, which is from the light of nature, and is attained unto through the use and exercise of it, or supernatural, which is come at by divine revelation.

Natural theology may be considered either as it was in Adam before the fall, or as in him and his posterity since the fall. Adam, before the fall, had great knowledge of things, divine as well as natural, moral and civil; he was created in the image of God, which image lay in knowledge, as well as in righteousness and holiness; before he came short of this glory, and lost this image, or at least was greatly impaired and obliterated in him by sin, he knew much of God, of his nature and attributes, of his mind and will, and the worship of him; he had knowledge of the persons in God, of a Trinity of persons who were concerned in the creation of all things, and in his own; and without which he could have had no true knowledge of God, nor have yielded the worship due to each divine person: not that all the knowledge he had was innate, or sprung from the light of nature within himself; but in it he was assisted, and it was capable of being increased by things without, as by symbols, the tree of life in the midst of the garden, &c. by positive precepts relating to the worship of God, and obedience to his will, as the prohibition to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the institution of marriage, &c. and through a constant and diligent contemplation of the works of creation; nor can we suppose him to be altogether without the benefit and advantage of divine revelation; since he had such a near and immediate intercourse and converse with God himself; and some things he could not have known without it; as the creation of the world, the order and manner of it; his own formation out of the dust of the earth; and the formation of Eve from him, that she was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, and was designed of God to be his wife, and an help-meet to him, and who should be the mother of all living; with other things respecting the worship of God, and the manner of it, and the covenant made with him as a federal head to all his posterity that should spring from him. These, with many other things, no doubt, Adam had immediate knowledge of from God himself.

But this kind of theology appeared with a different aspect in Adam after his fall, and in his posterity; by sin his mind was greatly beclouded, and his understanding darkened; he lost much of his knowledge of God, and of his perfections, or he could never have imagined that going among the trees of the garden would hide him from the presence of God, and secure him from his justice. What a notion must he have of the omnipresence of God? and what also of his omniscience, when he attempted to palliate and cover his sin by the excuse he made? and he immediately lost his familiar intercourse with God, and communion with him, being drove out of the garden; and as for his posterity, descending from him by ordinary generation, they appear to be in the same case and circumstances, without God in the world, without any true knowledge of him, and fellowship with him; they appear to be in the image of the earthly and sinful Adam, and not to have the image of God upon them; they are alienated from the life of God, and their understandings darkened as to the knowledge of divine and spiritual things; and though there are some remains of the light of nature in them, by which something of God may be known by them, even his eternal power and Godhead, by considering the works of creation, or else be inexcusable; yet whatever they know of him in theory, which does not amount to a true knowledge of God, they are without a practical knowledge of him; they glorify him not as God, and serve the creature more than the Creator; yea, what knowledge they have of God is very dim and obscure; they are like persons in the dark, who grope about, if happily they may feel after him, and find him; and what ridiculous notions have they entertained of Deity! and what gods have they feigned for themselves! and have fallen into impiety and idolatry, polytheism and atheism: being without a divine revelation, they are without the true knowledge of the worship of God; and therefore have introduced strange and absurd modes of worship; as well as are at a loss what methods to take to reconcile God, offended with them for their sins, when at any time sensible thereof; and what means and ways to make use of to recommend themselves to him; and therefore have gone into practices the most shocking and detestable. Being destitute of a divine revelation, they can have no assurance that God will pardon sin and sinners; nor have they any knowledge of his way of justifying sinners by the righteousness of his Son; which are doctrines of pure revelation: they can have no knowledge of Christ as Mediator, and of the way of peace and reconciliation, of life and salvation by him, and so can have no true knowledge of God in Christ; *for this is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.* There is no saving knowledge of God without Christ; wherefore the light of nature is insufficient to salvation; for though by it men may arrive to the knowledge of a God as the Creator of all things, yet not to the knowledge of Christ as the Saviour of men; and without faith in him there can be no salvation: and though men may by means of it know in some instances what is displeasing to God, and what agreeable to him; what to be avoided, and what to be performed; in which knowledge they are yet deficient; reckoning such things to be no sins which are grievous ones, as fornication, polygamy, suicide, &c. yet even in the things they do know, they do not in their practice answer to their knowledge of them; and did they, they could not be saved by them; for if by obedience to the deeds of the law of Moses none are justified and saved, then certainly not by obedience to the law and light of nature; none can be saved without faith in Christ, and his righteousness; there is no pardon but by his blood; no acceptance with God but through him: things that the light of nature leaves men strangers to. But of the weakness and insufficiency of natural theology to instruct men in the knowledge of divine things, destitute of a divine revelation, perhaps more may be said hereafter, when the theology of the Pagans may be observed.

Supernatural theology, or what is by pure revelation, may be next considered, in its original rise and progress; and as it has been improved and increased, or has met with checks and obstructions.

The state of this theology may be considered as it was from the first appearance of it, after the fall of Adam, to the flood in the times of Noah, or throughout the old world. What gave rise unto, and is the foundation of it, is what God pronounced to the serpent: *it* (the seed of the woman) *shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel:* these words contain the principal articles of Christian theology; as the incarnation of the Messiah, the Saviour of men; who should be *the seed of the woman*, made of a woman, made flesh, and become a partaker of the flesh and blood of those he was to save: and this seems to be understood by our first parents; hence it is thought that Eve imagined that this illustrious person was born of her, when she brought forth her first-born, saying, *I have gotten a man the Lord*, as some choose to render the word; as Enos, the son of Seth, afterwards was expected to be the Redeemer of the world, according to the Cabbalists[c]; and therefore was called Enos, the man, the famous excellent man; as they say. Likewise the sufferings and death of Christ in the human nature, by means of the serpent Satan; treading on whom, he, like a serpent, would turn himself, and bite his heel; wound him in his human nature, his inferior nature, called his heel, and so bring him to the dust of death. When the Messiah, by his sufferings and death, would bruise his head, confound his schemes, destroy his works; yea, destroy him himself, the devil, who had the power of death; and abolish that, and make an end of sin, the cause of it, by giving full satisfaction for it; and so save and deliver his people from all the sad effects of it, eternal wrath, ruin, and damnation. This kind of theology received some further improvement, from the coats of ſkin the Lord God made and clothed our first parents with them, an emblem of the justifying righteousness of Christ, and of the garments of salvation wrought out by his obedience, sufferings, and death; signified by slain beasts; and which God puts upon his people, and clothes them with, through his gracious act of imputation; and hence they are said to be justified by blood: and to which may be added, the hieroglyphic of the cherubim and flaming sword, placed at the end of the garden, to observe or point at the tree of life; representing the prophets of the Old, and the apostles and ministers of the New Testament, being placed and appointed to shew unto men the way of salvation by Christ, the tree of life. And what serves to throw more light on this evangelical theology, are the sacrifices ordered to be offered up; and which were types of the sacrifice of Christ; and particularly that which was offered up by Abel, who, *by faith* in the sacrifice of Christ, *offered up a more excellent sacrifice than Cain*; which also was a lamb, the firstling of his flock, and pointed at the lamb of God, who by his sacrifice takes away the sins of his people. Within this period of time men seem to have increased in light, as to the worship of God, especially public worship; for in the times of Enos, the grandson of Adam, men *began to call upon the name of the Lord*. Prayer to God, and invocation of his name, were, no doubt, used before; but men increasing, and families becoming more numerous, they now met and joined together in carrying on social and public worship: and though there were corruptions in practice, within this period of time; wicked Cain, whose works were evil, and who set a bad example to his posterity, he and they lived together, separate from the posterity of Seth, indulging themselves in the gratification of sinful pleasures; and it is said that in the times of Jared, some descended from the holy mountain, as it is called, to the company of Cain, in the valley, and mixed themselves with them, and took of their daughters for wives; from whence sprung a race of giants and wicked men, who were the cause of the flood. Lamech gave into the practice of bigamy; and Pseudo-Berosus says[d], that Ham lived a very vicious and profligate life before the flood; yet there does not appear to have been any corruption in doctrine and worship, or any idolatry exercised. Some indeed have pretended[e] that in the days of Enosh images were invented, to excite the minds of creatures to pray to God by them as mediators; but this is said without any foundation.

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[c] Reuchlin. Cabala. l. 1. p. 740.

The next period of time in which supernatural theology may be traced, is from the flood, in the times of Noah, to the giving of the law to Israel, in the times of Moses. Noah was instructed in it by his father Lamech, who expected[f] great comfort from him; and, as some think, in spiritual as well as in civil things, Gen. v. 29. however, he instructed him in the true religion, as it was received from the first man, Adam; and it was taught by Noah, and the knowledge of it conveyed to his posterity, partly in the ministry of the word by him; for he was a preacher of righteousness; even of evangelical righteousness, of the righteousness of faith; of which he was an heir, and therefore no doubt preached the same to others: and partly by the sacrifices he offered, which were of clean creatures he had knowledge of the distinction of; and which sacrifices were of a sweet savour to God, and were typical of the purity of Christ's sacrifice for sin, and of the acceptance of it to God, which is to him of a sweet smelling savour. Moreover, the waters of the flood, and the ark in which Noah and his family were preserved, were a type of an evangelical ordinance, the ordinance of baptism; which is an emblem of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; by which men are saved: for Noah and his family going into the ark, where, when the fountains of the great deep were broken up below, and the windows of heaven opened above, they were like persons covered in water, and immersed in it, and as persons buried; and when they came out of it, the water being carried off, it was like a resurrection, and as life from the dead; the *like figure*, or antitype *whereunto*, the apostle says, *even baptism, doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ* signified thereby, 1 Pet. iii. 21. likewise the rainbow, the token of the covenant; which, though not the covenant of grace, yet of kindness and preservation; was an emblem of peace and reconciliation by Christ, the mediator of the covenant of grace; and may assure of the everlasting love of God to his people, and of the immoveableness of the covenant of his peace with them, Isa. liv. 9, 10. In the line of Shem, the son of Noah, the knowledge of this kind of theology was continued: Noah's blessing of him is thought by the Cabalists[g], to contain his earnest desire that he might be the Redeemer of men. However, God was the Lord of Shem, known, owned, and professed by him; and he was the father of all the children of Eber. According to the Jews[h] Shem had a divinity-school, where the sons of Japhet, becoming proselytes, dwelt; and which continued to the times of Isaac; for he is reported to go thither to pray for Rebecca[i]. Eber also, according to them, had such a school; where

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[d] Antiq. l. 3. p. 25.

[e] Juchasin, fol. 134. 2. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 74. 2.

[f] Reuchlin. ib.

[g] Reuchlin, ut supra.

[h] Targum Jon. in Gen. ix. 27.

[i] Targ. Jerus. & Jon. in Gen. xxv. 22.

Jacob[k] was a minister, servant, or disciple: and so had Abraham in the land of Canaan; and his three hundred trained servants are supposed to be his catechumens; and also in Haran, where Abraham, it is said[l], taught and proselyted the men, and Sarah the women: however, this we are sure of, that he instructed and "commanded his children, and his houshold after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice and judgement," Gen. xviii. 19. Moreover, as the gospel was preached unto Abraham, Gal. iii. 8. there is no doubt but that he preached it to others; and as he had knowledge of the Messiah, who should spring from him, in whom all nations of the earth would be blessed, and who saw his day and was glad; so his grandson Jacob had a more clear and distinct view of him, as God's salvation, as the Shiloh, the peace-maker and prosperous one, who should come, before civil government was removed from the Jews; and when come, multitudes should be gathered to him, Gen. xlix. 10—18. Idolatry within this period first began among the builders of Babel: some say in the days of Serug[m], it was embraced by the Zabians in Chaldea, and obtained in the family of Terah, the father of Abraham. The worship of the sun and moon prevailed in the times of Job, in Arabia; who lived about the time of the children of Israel being in Egypt, and a little before their coming out of it; who do not appear to have given into the idolatry of that people. As for Job and his three friends, it is plain they had great knowledge of God and divine things; of the perfections of God; of the impurity of human nature; of the insufficiency of man's righteousness to justify him before God; and of the doctrine of redemption and salvation by Christ.

The next period is from the giving of the law to Israel, by the hand of Moses, to the times of David and the prophets; in which supernatural theology was taught by types; as the passover, the manna, the brazen serpent, and other things; which were emblems of Christ and his grace, and salvation by him: and by the sacrifices instituted, particularly the daily sacrifice morning and evening, and the annual sacrifices on the day of atonement; which, besides all others, were typical of, and led the faith of men to the expiation of sins, to be made by the sacrifice of Christ: the whole ceremonial law, all that related to the priests, their garments, and their work and office, had an evangelical signification; it was the Jews gospel, and which led them to Christ, and to an acquaintance with the things of Christ; and to what make him, his grace and righteousness, necessary to salvation; as the evil nature of sin; the insufficiency of men to make atonement for it; to fulfill the law, and bring in a righteousness answerable to it: Moses wrote of Christ, of his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices, either by type or prophesy: the song of Moses in Deut. xxxii. and of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. very clearly speak of the perfections of God, of his works of providence and grace, and of the Messiah. According to the Jews, there was a divinity-school in the times of Samuel. Naioth in Ramah is interpreted an house of doctrine, or school of instruction, of which Samuel was president; where he stood over the prophets, teaching and instructing them, 1 Sam. xix. 18, 19. Such schools there were in after-times, at Bethel, and Jericho, and Gilgal; even in the times of Elijah and Elisha; where the sons or disciples of the prophets were trained up in the knowledge of divine things, 2 Kings ii. 3, 5. and iv. 38. in such a college or house of instruction, as the Targum, Huldah, the prophetess dwelt at Jerusalem, 2 Kings xxii. 14. There were within this time some checks to the true knowledge and worship of God, by the idolatry of the calf at Sinai; Baal-peor, on the borders of Moab; and of Baalim and Ashtaroth, and other deities, after the death of Joshua, and in the times of the Judges.

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[k] Targ. Onk. & Jon. in Gen. xxv. 27.

[l] Bereshit Rabba, s. 39. fol. 35. 1.

[m] Suidas in voce Ἀβραάμ, & in voce Σερούχ.

The period from the times of David, including them, to the Babylonish captivity, abounds with evangelic truths, and doctrines of supernatural theology. The Psalms of David are full of spiritual and evangelic knowledge; many intimations are given of the sufferings and death of Christ, of his burial, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God; and on which many blessings of grace depend, which could never have been known but by divine revelation. And the prophets which followed him speak out still more clearly of the incarnation of Christ; point out the very place where he was to be born, and the country where he would preach the gospel, to the illumination of those that sat in darkness. They plainly describe him in his person, his offices, the sufferings he should undergo, and the circumstances of them, and benefits arising from them; they bear witness to the doctrines of pardon of sin through him, and justification by him; and of his bearing sin, and making satisfaction for it: in short, a scheme of evangelic truths may be deduced from the prophetic writings; and, indeed, the great apostle Paul himself said no other things than what the prophets did. There were some sad revolts from the true God, and his worship, within this compass of time, in the reigns of some of the kings of Israel and Judah; as the idolatry of the calves in the reign of Jeroboam, and others of the kings of Israel; and the idolatries committed in the times of Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon, kings of Judah, which issued in the captivities of both people.

The period from the Babylonish captivity to the times of Christ, finish the Old Testament-dispensation. At the return of the Jews from captivity, who brought no idolatrous worship with them, there was a reformation made by Ezra and Nehemiah, with the prophets of their time; or who quickly followed, as Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi; who all prophesied of Christ the Saviour, and of the salvation that should come by him; with the several blessings of it; and speak of his near approach, and point at the time of his coming, and the work he should do when come. But after the death of these prophets, and the Holy Spirit departed, and there was no more prophecy, supernatural theology began greatly to decline; and the truths of revelation were neglected and despised; and the doctrines and traditions of men were preferred to the word of God, that was made of none effect by them. The sect of the Sadducees, a sort of free-thinkers, rose up; who said there was no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; and the sect of the Pharisees, a sort of free-willers, who set up traditions as the rule of men's worship, and which rose to an enormous bigness in the times of Christ, who severely inveighed against them; and which in after-times were compiled and put together in a volume, called, the Misnah, their traditional, or body of traditions: and this, in course of time, occasioned a large work finished in Babylon, and from thence called the Babylonian Talmud; which is their doctrinal, or body of doctrine; full of fables, false glosses and interpretations of Scriptures; and which is the foundation of the erroneous doctrines and practices of the Jews to this day.

And here I shall take leave to transcribe the interpretation of the vision in Zech. v. 6—11. given by that learned man George Eliezer Edzard[a], it being very ingenious and uncommon, and much to our present purpose. This learned man observes, that the preceding vision of the flying roll describes the sad corruption of manners among the Jews, in the three or four former ages of the second temple; doctrine remaining pretty sound among them; which corruption of manners was punished by the incursions of the Lagidæ and Seleucidæ, kings of Egypt and Syria, into Judea, as the vision represents. The following vision of a woman sitting in an *ephah*, and shut up in it, and then transported by two other women into the land of Shinar; he thus interprets: by the *woman*, who, by way of eminency, is called *wickedness*, is to be understood the impious and false doctrine devised by the Pharisees and Sadducees; and other corrupt doctors of the Jews in the latter times of the second temple, and handed down to posterity; compared to a woman, because it had nothing manly, nothing true, nothing solid in it; and moreover, caused its followers to commit spiritual fornication, and allured to it by its paints, flatteries, and prittle-prattle: and it is called wickedness because not only the less fundamentals, but the grand fundamentals, and principal articles of faith, concerning the mystery of the Trinity, the Deity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit, the person and office of the Messiah, were sadly defiled by it; and in the room of them were substituted, traditions, precepts, and inventions of men; than which greater impiety cannot be thought of; and which issued in the contempt and rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah, sent as the Saviour of the world; and in the persecution of the preachers of the gospel, and putting a stop to the course of it, as much as could be; and which drew with it a train of other sins. The *ephah*, he thinks, designs the whole body of the people of the Jews, throughout Judea, Samaria, and Galilee; which *ephah* was first seen as *empty*, ver. 6. and this being a dry measure, with which wheat and such like things were measured, the food of the body, a proper type of the heavenly doctrine, the food of the soul: by the emptiness of the ephah is intimated, that sound doctrine, about the time of the Messiah's coming, would be banished out of Judea, and the neighbouring parts: and most of the inhabitants thereof would be destitute of the knowledge of the pure faith. And the wicked woman *sitting in the midst of the ephah*, and filling it, not a corner of it, but the whole; and is represented not as lying prostrate, but sitting; denotes the total corruption of doctrine, its power and prevalence, throughout Judea, Samaria, and Galilee; obtaining in all places, synagogues, schools, and seats, and pulpits, and among all sorts of inhabitants; the few being crushed who professed the sound doctrine of the Trinity, and of the person and office of the Messiah. And whereas a *talent of lead* was seen *lifted up*; this signifies the divine decree concerning the destruction of the Jews and their polity by the Romans; which should be most surely executed on them, for their corruption of doctrine, and for sins that flowed from thence. The *lifting* up of the talent, not only prefigured the near approach of the judgment, but the setting it before the eyes of the people, to be beheld through the ministry of Christ, and his apostles, before it was executed; that while there was hope, if it might be, some might be brought to repentance, and to the acknowledgment of the true Messiah; but this failing of success, the talent was *cast into the* ephah, and upon the woman in it, signifying the destruction of the Jews; of which the angel that talked with Zachariah the prophet, and who was no other than the Son of God, was the principal author; Vespasian, and the Roman army under him, being only ministers and instruments. Not that hereby the woman, or the corrupt doctrine, was wholly extinguished; but it was depressed, and weakened, and reduced, and was among a few only, great numbers of the doctors and disciples of it being slain, and many of both classes being exiled; the temple and city burnt, heretofore the chief seat of it, and the schools throughout Judea destroyed, in which it was propagated. But in process of time the Jews restored some schools in Palestine, as at Jabneth, Zippore, Cæsarea, and Tiberias, in the last of which, R. Judah Hakkadosh compiled the Misnah, about A. D. 150. and after that came out the Jerusalem Talmud, A. D. 230. and after the death of the above Rabbi, his chief disciples went into Babylon, and carried with them the greatest part of the doctors and their scholars out of Palestine: so that doctrine by little and little disappeared in Judea, and entirely about the year 340, when R. Hillell died, the last of those promoted doctors in the land of Israel: and after this scarce any thing was heard of the schools and wise men of Palestine; but schools continued in Babylon for many ages; and this is what is meant in the last part of the symbolic vision of Zachariah, by the *ephah* being carried by two women into the land of Shinar, that is Babylon: By these *two women* are meant the Misnic and Gemaristic doctors; the two heads of which were Raf and Samuel, who went into Babylon a little after the death of R. Judah, the saint, and carried the woman, false doctrine, along with them; these are said to have *wings like storks*, fit for long journies, to fly with on high, and with swiftness, into remote parts; and fitly describes the above persons transporting their false doctrine into the remote parts of Babylon, far from Palestine; carrying great numbers from thence, which they did without weariness, and with as much celerity as they could: and *the wind* being *in their wings*, denotes the cheerfulness with which the Jewish Rabbins pursued their studies till they had finished their design, the Talmud, which they could not perfect without the impulse and help of an evil spirit, signified by the wind. And here in Babylon they *build an house* for their false doctrine, erected various schools, in which it was taught and propagated; and so it was *established* and *set on its own base*, and continued for 800 years or more. This is the sense which this learned man gives of the vision; on which I shall make no more remarks than I have done, by saying it is ingenious and uncommon, and suits with the subject I am upon, which introduced it, and opens the source of the corruption of doctrine among the Jews, and shews the continuance of it, and the means thereof.

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[a] Præfat. ad Annotat. in Tract. Beracot.

Having traced supernatural theology, or divinity, to the times of Christ; let us a little look back upon the theology of the Pagans, before we proceed any further. At, or a little after, the building of Babel, and the dispersion of the people, idolatry began to appear; the knowledge of the true God was greatly lost, and the worship of him neglected. Some say this began in the days of Serug, but perhaps it might be earlier: the first objects of it seem to be the sun and moon; which it is certain obtained in the times of Job; and then their kings and heroes, whom they deified after death; and which at length issued in a multiplicity of gods throughout the several nations of the earth; and what of truth remained among them, was disguised with fables; or, to use the apostle's phrase, they *changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator*; their foolish hearts being darkened. The theology of the Pagans, according to themselves, as Scævola[o] and Varro[p], was of three sorts,—1. Mystic, or fabulous, which belonged to the poets, and was sung by them.—2. Physic, or natural; which belonged to the philosophers, and were studied by them.—3. Politic, or civil, which belonged to princes, priests, and people; being instituted by the one, exercised by the other, and enjoined the people. The first of these may well be called fabulous, as treating of the theogony and genealogy of their deities; in which they say such things as are unworthy of deity; ascribing to them thefts, murders, adulteries, and all manner of crimes; and therefore this kind of theology is condemned by the wiser sort of heathens as nugatory and scandalous; the writers of this sort of theology were Sanchoniatho, the Phœnician; and of the Grecians, Orpheus, Hesiod, Pherecydes, &c. The second sort, called physic, or natural, was studied and taught by the philosophers; who, rejecting the multiplicity of gods introduced by the poets, brought their theology to a more natural and rational form; and supposed that there was but one supreme God, which they commonly make to be the sun; at least as an emblem of him; but at too great a distance to mind the affairs of the world, and therefore devised certain demons, which they considered as mediators between the supreme God and man: and the doctrines of these dæmons, to which the apostle is thought to allude in 1 Tim. iv. 1. were what the philosophers had a concern with, and who treat of their nature, office, and regard to men; as did Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, and the Stoics. The third part, called politic, or civil, was instituted by legislators, statesmen, and politicians: the first among the Romans was Numa Pompilius; this chiefly respected their gods, temples, altars, sacrifices, and rites of worship; and was properly their idolatry; the care of which belonged to the priests; and this was enjoined the common people, to keep them in obedience to the civil state. Thus things continued in the Gentile world, until the light of the gospel was sent among them; the times before that were *times of ignorance*, as the apostle calls them; they were ignorant of the true God, and of the worship of him; and of the Messiah, and salvation by him: their state is truly described, Eph. ii. 12. that they were then *without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*. And consequently, their theology was insufficient for the salvation of them.

But to return to supernatural theology, where we left it, having traced it to the times of Christ: at whose coming, and through whose ministry, and that of his forerunner, and of his Apostles, it revived and lift up its head, and appeared in all its purity, splendour, and glory. John was a man sent from God, to bear witness to the light that was just rising, even the sun of righteousness, the day-spring from on high; the great light that should lighten those that sat in darkness with a supernatural light; he declared the kingdom of Heaven, or gospel-dispensation was at hand, and just ushering in; and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin, and administered that gospel-ordinance. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, had spoke to the fathers by the prophets, now spoke to men by his Son:" Christ his only begotten son, who lay in his bosom, came and declared him; who and what he was, and what was his mind and will: he brought the doctrines of grace and truth with him; and spoke such words of grace, truth, and wisdom, as never man spoke; his doctrine was not human, but divine; it was not his own as man, he received it from his Father, and delivered to his apostles; who having a commission from him to preach it, and being qualified for it, with the gifts and graces of his Spirit in great abundance, they went into all the world and preached the gospel to every creature; and diffused the savour of his knowledge in every place; they had the deep things of God revealed unto them; things, which could never have been discovered by the light of nature; nor were revealed in the law of Moses; things "which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, nor ever entered into the heart of man;" which the reason of men could never have descried; "they spoke the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory." In the books of the New Testament are written, as with a sun-beam, those truths of pure revelation, the doctrines of a Trinity of divine persons in the Godhead; of the eternal Sonship, distinct personality and deity of Christ, and of his several offices as Mediator; and of the distinct personality and deity of the Holy Spirit; and of his operations of grace upon the souls of men; of the everlasting and unchangeable love of the three divine persons to the elect; of the predestination of them to the adoption of children; and of their eternal election in Christ to grace and glory; of the covenant of grace made with them in Christ, and the blessings of it; of redemption by Christ, full pardon of sin through his blood, free justification from sin by his righteousness, and plenary satisfaction for it by his atoning sacrifice; of regeneration, or the new birth; effectual calling; conversion, and sanctification, by the efficacious grace of the Spirit; of the saints final perseverance in grace to glory, and of the resurrection from the dead, and a future state of immortal life and happiness: all which are brought to light by the gospel of Christ. And these are the sum and substance of supernatural theology, and the glory of it. And whilst the apostles continued, and other ministers of the word raised up in their times, these doctrines were held fast, and held forth with great clearness and perspicuity; but as the historian says[9], after the holy company of the apostles had ended their lives, and that generation was gone, which was worthy to hear the divine wisdom, then a system of impious error took place, through the deceit of false teachers; false doctrine was attempted to be introduced, in opposition to the truth of the gospel, which had been preached; not one of the apostles remaining to oppose it. The doctrines of divine revelation, Satan, by his emissaries, set himself against to undermine and destroy, were the doctrines of the Trinity; the incarnation of Christ, of a virgin; his proper deity, as by some, and his real humanity, as by others; his eternal Sonship, or his being begotten of the Father before all worlds.

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[o] Apud. Augustin. de Civ. Dei, l. 4. c. 27.

[p] Apud. Ib. l. 6. c. 5.

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[9] Egesippus apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 32.

The school at Alexandria, from whence came several of the Christian doctors, as Pantaenus, Clemens, Origen, &c. served very much to corrupt the simplicity of the gospel; for though it mended the Platonic philosophy, it marred the Christian doctrine; and laid the foundation for Arianism and Pelagianism, which in after-times so greatly disturbed the church of God. As many of the fathers of the Christian church were originally Pagans, they were better skilled in demolishing Paganism, than in building up Christianity; and indeed they set themselves more to destroy the one, than to illustrate and confirm the other: there was a purity in their lives, but a want of clearness, accuracy, and consistence in their doctrines: it would be endless to relate how much the Christian doctrine was obscured by the heretics that rose up in the latter part of the first century, and in the second, as well as after by Sabellians, Photinians, Samosatenians, Arians, Eutychians, Nestorians, Macedonians, Pelagians, &c. though God was pleased to raise up instruments to stop their progress, and preserve the truth, and sometimes very eminent ones; as Athanasius against the Arians, and Austin against the Pelagians. The gospel in its simplicity, through the power of divine grace attending it, made its way into the gentile world, in these first centuries, with great success; and paganism decreased before it; and which in the times of Constantine received a fatal blow in the Roman Empire; and yet by degrees pagan rites and ceremonies were introduced into the Christian church; and what with them, and errors in doctrine, and other things concurring, made way for the man of sin to appear; and that mystery of iniquity, which had been secretly working from the times of the apostles, to shew its head openly; and brought in the darkness of popery upon almost all that bore the Christian name.

In the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, flourished a set of men called schoolmen; these framed a new sort of divinity, called from them scholastic theology; the first founder of which some make to be Damascene, among the Greeks; and others Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, among the Latins; though generally Peter Lombard is reckoned the father of these men; who was followed by our countryman Alexander Hales; and after him were Albertus Magnus, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas; and after them Duns Scotus, Durandus, and others; their divinity was founded upon and confirmed by the philosophy of Aristotle; and that not understood by them, and wrongly interpreted to them; for as they could not read Aristotle in his own language, the Greek, they were beholden to the Arabic interpreters of him, who led them wrong. Their theology lay in contentious and litigious disputations; in thorny questions, and subtle distinctions; and their whole scheme was chiefly directed to support antichristianism, and the tenets of it; so that by their means popish darkness was the more increased, and Christian divinity was banished almost out of the world; and was only to be found among a few, among the Waldenses and Albigenses, and the inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont, and some particular persons and their followers, as Wickliff, John Huss, and Jerom of Prague; and so things continued till the reformation begun by Zuinglius and Luther, and carried on by others; by whose means evangelical light was spread through many nations in Europe; the doctrines of the apostles were revived, and supernatural theology once more lifted up its head; the reformed churches published their confessions of faith, and many eminent men wrote common places, and systems of divinity; in which they all agreed in the main, to support the doctrines of revelation; as of the Trinity, and the Deity of the divine persons in it, those of predestination and eternal election in Christ, of redemption by him, pardon of sin by his blood, and justification by his righteousness.

But Satan, who envied the increasing light of the gospel, soon began to bestir himself, and to play his old game which he had done with so much success in the first ages of Christianity; having been for a long time otherwise engaged, to nurse up the man of sin, and to bring him to the height of his impiety and tyranny, and to support him in it: and now as his kingdom was like to be shook, if not subverted, by the doctrines of the reformation; he, I say, goes to his old work again; and revives the Sabellian and Photinian errors, by the Socinians in Poland; and the Pelagian errors, by the Arminians and remonstrants in Holland; the pernicious influence of which has been spread in other countries; and, indeed, has drawn a veil over the glory of the reformation, and the doctrines of it. And the doctrines of pure revelation are almost exploded; and some are endeavouring to bring us, as fast as they can, into a state of paganism, only somewhat refined: it is a day of darkness and gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness; the darkness is growing upon us, and night may be expected; though for our relief it is declared, "that at evening time it shall be light." Almost all the old heresies are revived, under a fond and foolish notion of new light; when they are no other than what have been confuted over and over; and men please themselves that they are their own inventions, when they are the devices of Satan, with which he has deceived men once and again; and when men leave the sure word, the only rule of faith and practice, and follow their own fancies, and the dictates of their carnal minds, they must needs go wrong, and fall into labyrinths, out of which they cannot find their way: "to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Let us therefore search the Scriptures, to see whether doctrines advanced are according to them or not, which I fear are little attended to. Upon the whole, as I suggested at the beginning of this Introduction, I have but little reason to think the following Work will meet with a favourable reception in general; yet if it may be a means of preserving sacred truths, of enlightening the minds of any into them, or of establishing them in them, I shall not be concerned at what evil treatment I may meet with from the adversaries of them; and be it as it may, I shall have the satisfaction of having done the best I can for the promoting truth; and of bearing a testimony to it.

B O O K I.

OF GOD, HIS WORD, NAMES, NATURE, PERFECTIONS, AND PERSONS.

OF THE BEING OF GOD.

HAVING undertaken to write a system of Theology, or a Body of Doctrinal Divinity; and Theology being nothing else than a speaking of God, or a discoursing concerning him; his nature, names, perfections, and persons; his purposes, providences, ways, works, and word. I shall begin with the Being of God, and the proof and evidence of it; which is the foundation of all religion; for if there is no God, religion is a vain thing; and it matters not, neither what we believe, nor what we do; since there is no superior Being to whom we are accountable for either faith or practice. Some, because the Being of God is a first principle, which is not to be disputed; and because that there is one is a self-evident proposition, not to be disproved; have thought it should not be admitted as a matter of debate[a]: but since such is the malice of Satan, as to suggest the contrary to the minds of men; and such the badness of some wicked men as to listen to it, and imbibe it; and such the weakness of some good men as to be harrassed and distressed with doubts about it, at times; it cannot be improper to endeavour to fortify our minds with reasons and arguments against such suggestions and insinuations.

My first argument to prove the Being of a God, shall be taken from the general consent of men of all nations, in all ages of the world; among whom the belief of it has universally obtained; which it is not reasonable to suppose would have obtained, if it was not true. This has been observed by many heathen writers themselves. Aristotle says[b], all men have a persuasion of Deity, or that there is a God. Cicero observes[c], "There is no nation so wild and savage, whose minds are not imbued with the opinion of the Gods; many entertain wrong notions of them; but all suppose and own the divine power and nature." And in another place[d] he says, "There is no animal besides man that has any knowledge of God; and of men there is no nation so untractable and fierce, although it may be ignorant what a God it should have, yet is not ignorant that one should be had." And again[e], "It is the sense of all mankind, that it is innate in all, and is, as it were, engraven on the mind, that there is a God; but what a one he is, in that they vary; but that he is, none denies." And to the same sense are the words[f] of Seneca, "There never was a nation so dissolute and abandoned, so lawless and immoral, as to believe there is no God." So Ælianus[g] relates, "None of the barbarous nations ever fell into atheism, or doubted of the gods, whether they were or no, or whether they took care of human affairs or not; not the Indians, nor the Gauls, nor the Egyptians." And Plutarch[h] has these remarkable words, "If you go over the earth, says he, you may find cities without walls, letters, kings, houses, wealth, and money, devoid of theatres and schools; but a city without temples and gods, and where is no use of prayers, oaths, and oracles, nor sacrifices to obtain good or avert evil, no man ever saw." These things were observed and said, when the true knowledge of God was in a great measure lost, and idolatry prevailed; and yet even then, this was the general sense of mankind. In the first ages of the world, men universally believed in the true God, and worshipped him, as Adam and his sons, and their posterity, until the flood; nor does there appear any trace of idolatry before it, nor for some time after. The sins which caused that, and with which the world was filled, seem to be lewdness and uncleanness, rapine and violence. Some think the tower of Babel was built for an idolatrous use; and it may be that about that time idolatry was set up; as it is thought to have prevailed in the days of Serug: and it is very probable that when the greater part of the posterity of Noah's sons were dispersed throughout the earth, and settled in the distant parts of it; that as they were remote from those among whom the true worship of God was preserved; they, by degrees, lost sight of the true God, and forsook his worship; and this being the case, they began to worship the sun in his stead, and which led on to the worship of the moon, and the host of heaven; which seem to be the first objects of idolatry. This was as early as the times of Job, who plainly refers to it, ch. xxxi. 26, 27. And, indeed, when men had cast off the true object of worship, what more natural to substitute in his room than the sun, moon, and stars, which were above them, visible by them, and so glorious in themselves, and so beneficial to the earth and men on it. Hence the people of Israel were exhorted to take care that their eyes were not ensnared at the sight of them, to fall down and worship them; and which in after times they did, Deut. iv. 19. 2 Kings xxi. 3. It appears also that men took very early to the edifying of their heroes after death, their kings, great personages, either for their wisdom and knowledge, or for their courage and valour, and marshal exploits, and other things; such were the Bel or Belus, of the Babylonians; the Baal-peor of the Moabites; and the Molech of the Phœnicians; and other Baalim, lords, or kings, mentioned in the scriptures: and such were Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Hercules; and the rest of the rabble of the heathen deities; and indeed their Lares and Penates, or houshold gods, were no other than the images of their deceased parents, or more remote ancestors, whose memory they revered; and in process of time their deities became very numerous; they had gods many and lords many: even with the Jews, when fallen into idolatry, their gods were according to the number of their cities, Jer. ii. 28. And as for the Gentiles, they worshipped almost every thing; not only the sun, moon, and stars; but the earth, fire, and water; and various sorts of animals, as oxen, goats, and swine, cats and dogs; the fishes of the rivers, the river-horse, and the crocodile, those amphibious creatures; the fowls of the air, as the hawk, stork, and ibis; and even insects, the fly; yea, creeping things, as serpents, the beetle, &c. as also vegetables, onions, and garlic; which occasioned the satyrical[i] poet to say, *O sanctas gentis quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis, numina!* O holy nations, whose gods are born in their gardens! Nay, some have worshipped the devil himself, as both in the East and West Indies[k]; and that for this reason, that he might not hurt them. Now though all this betrays the dreadful depravity of human nature; the wretched ignorance of mankind; and the sad stupidity men were sunk into; yet at the same time such shocking idolatry, in all the branches of it, is a full proof of the truth and force of my argument, that all men, in all ages and countries, have been possessed of the notion of a God; since, rather than have no God, they have chosen false ones; so deeply rooted is a sense of Deity in the minds of all men.

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[a] So Aristotle says, every problem and proposition is not to be disputed; they that doubt whether God is to be worshipped, and parents loved, are to be punished, and not disputed with. *Topic.* l. 1. c. 9. [b] *De Coelo*, l. 1. c. 3. [c] *Tusculan. Quæst.* l. 1. c. 13.

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[d] De Legibus, l. 1. [e] De Natura Deorum, l. 2. [f] Ep. 117. [g] Var. Hist. l. 2. c. 31. So Plato de Legibus, l. 10. p. 945. [h] Adv. Colotem, vol. 2. p. 1125.

I am sensible that to this it is objected, that there have been, at different times, and in different countries, some particular persons[l] who have been reckoned atheists, deniers of the being of a God. But some of these men were only deriders of the gods of their country; they mocked at them as unworthy of the name, as weak and insufficient to help them; as they reasonably might; just as Elijah mocked at Baal, and his worshippers. Now the common people because they so behaved towards their gods, looked upon them as atheists, as such who did not believe there was any God. Others were so accounted, because they excluded the gods from any concern with human affairs; they thought they were otherwise employed, and that such things were below their notice, and not becoming their grandeur and dignity to regard; and had much the same sentiments as some of the Jews, Ezek. ix. 9. Zeph. i. 12. But these men were not deniers of the existence of God, only of his providence as to the affairs of the world: and others have been rather practical than speculative atheists, as the fool in Ps. xiv. 1. who not only live as if there was no God; but wish in their hearts there was none, rather than believe there is none; that so they might take their fill of sin, without being accountable to a superior being. The number of real speculative atheists have been very few, if any; some have boldly asserted their disbelief of a god; but it is a question whether their hearts and mouths have agreed; at least they have not been able to maintain their unbelief long[m] without some doubts and fears. And at most this only shews how much the reason of man may be debased; and how low it may sink when left to itself: these few instances are only particular exceptions to a general rule; which is not destroyed thereby, being contrary to the common sense of mankind; even as it is no sufficient objection to the definition of man, as a rational creature, that there is now and then an idiot born of his race, so not to the general belief of Deity, that there is now and then an atheist in the world.

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[i] Juvenal. Satyr. 15. v. 10.

[k] Peter Martyr de Angleria. Decad. 1. l. 9. Vartoman. Navigat. l. 5. c. 22. 23. and l. 6. c. 16. 17.

[l] Plutarch. de Placitis Philoſoph. l. 1. c. 7.

It is further objected, that there have been whole nations in Africa and America, who have no notion of Deity. But this is what has not been sufficiently proved; it depends upon the testimonies of travellers, and what one affirms, another denies; so that nothing can with certainty be concluded from them. "I should rather question, says Herbert, Lord Cherbury[n], whether the light of the sun has shone on the remotest regions, than that the knowledge of the Supreme Being is hidden from them; since the sun is only conspicuous in its own sphere; but the Supreme Being is seen in every thing. Diodorus Siculus[o] says, a few of the Ethiopians were of opinion there was no God; though before he had represented them as the first and most religious of all nations, as attested by all antiquity. The Hottentots, about the Cape of Good Hope, have been instanced in, as without any knowledge of Deity: and certainly they are a most beastly and brutish people that can be named, and the most degenerate of the human species, and have survived the common instincts of humanity[p]; yet, according to Mr. Kolben's account of them, published some years ago[q], they appear to have some sense of a Supreme Being, and of inferior deities. They express a superstitious joy at new and full moons; and it is said they pray to a Being that dwells above; and offer sacrifice of the best things they have, with eyes lifted up to heaven[r]. And later discoveries of other nations, shew the contrary to what has been asserted of them; which assertions have arose either from want of intimate knowledge of them, and familiar acquaintance with them, or from their dissolute, wicked and irreligious lives; when, by conversing with them, it appears that they have a notion of the sun, or sky, or something or another being a sort of deity. Thus it has been observed of the Greenlanders[s], that "they had neither a religion nor idolatrous worship; nor so much as any ceremonies to be perceived tending to it: hence the first missionaries entertained a supposition, that there was not the least trace to be found among them of any conception of a divine Being, especially as they had no word to express him by. But when they came to understand their language better, they found quite the reverse to be true, from the notions they had, though very vague and various, concerning the soul, and concerning spirits; and also from their anxious solicitude about the state after death. And not only so, but they could plainly gather from a free dialogue they had with some perfectly wild Greenlanders, that their ancestors must have believed a supreme Being, and did render him some service; which their posterity neglected by little and little, the further they were removed from more wise and civilized nations; till at last they lost every just conception of the Deity; yet, after all, it is manifest, that a faint idea of a divine Being lies concealed in the minds even of this people, because they directly assent without any objection, to the doctrine of a God, and his attributes." And as to what is concluded from the irreligious lives of the inhabitants of some nations, we need not be sent to Africa and America for such atheists as these; we have enough of them in our own nation; and I was just ready to say, we are a nation of atheists in this sense: and, indeed, all men in an unregenerate state, be they Jews or Gentiles, or live where they may, they are αθεοι, atheists; as the apostle calls them, Eph. ii. 12. they are "without God in the world, being alienated from the life of God," ch. iv. 18. otherwise there is such a general sense of Deity in mankind; and such a natural inclination to religion, of some sort or another, though ever so bad, that some have thought that man should rather be defined as a religious than a rational animal. I take no notice of the holy angels, who worship God continually; nor of the devils, who believe there is one God and tremble; my argument being only concerned with men.

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[m] Plato observes, that no man that embraced this opinion from his youth, that there is no God, ever continued in it to old age, De Legibus, l. 10. p. 947.

[n] De Relig. Gent. c. 13. p. 225.

[o] Biblioth. l. 3. p. 148.

[p] See the Philos. Transact. Abrid. Vol. 5. part 2. p. 154.

[q] See Dr. Watts's Strength and Weakness of human reason, Vol. II. of his works, p. 260. &c.

[r] See Ovington's Voyage to Surat, p. 489. 498, and Dampier's Voyages, Vol. I. p. 541.

[s] Crantz's History of Greenland, Vol. I. b. 3. ch. 5. p. 193. 198.

The second argument shall be taken from the law and light of nature; or from the general instinct in men, or impress of Deity on the mind of every man; that is, as soon as he begins to have the exercise of his rational powers, he thinks and speaks of God, and assents to the Being of a God. This follows upon the former, and is to be proved by it; for as Cicero[t] says, "The consent of all nations in any thing, is to be reckoned the law of nature." And since all nations agree in the belief of a Deity, that must be a part of the law of nature, inscribed on the heart of every man. Seneca[u] makes use of this to prove there is a God; "because, says he, an opinion or sense of Deity, is implanted in the minds of all men." And so likewise Cicero, as observed before; and who calls them the notions of Deity implanted and innate. And whoever believes the Mosaic account of the creation of man, cannot doubt of this being his case, when first created; since he is said to be made in the image, and after the likeness of God; for the image of God surely could not be impressed upon him, without having the knowledge of him implanted in him; and though man by sinning has greatly come short of this image, and glory of God, yet this light of nature is not wholly obscured, nor the law of nature entirely obliterated in him; there are some remains of it. There are some indeed among us, who deny there are any innate ideas in

[t] *Ut ſupra.* [u] *Ut ſupra.*

the minds of men, and particularly concerning God: but to such writers and reasoners I pay but little regard; when the inspired apostle assures us, that even the Gentiles, destitute of the law of Moses, have the *work of the law written in their hearts*, Rom. ii. 15. which, as it regards duty to God, as well as man, necessarily supposes the knowledge of him; as well as of the difference between good and evil, as founded upon his nature and will: And though this light of nature is not sufficient to lead men in their present state, to a true, spiritual and saving knowledge of God; yet it furnishes them with such a sense of him, as puts them upon seeking him; "if haply they may feel and grope after him, and find him," Acts xvii. 27. These notices of a divine Being do not flow from the previous instructions of parents and others; but from a natural instinct; at most, they are only drawn forth by instruction and teaching; "that there is a Deity, Velleius, the Epicurean, says[w], nature itself has impressed the notion of, on the minds of all men; for what nation, or sort of men, adds he, that has not a certain anticipation of it without being taught it," or before taught it, as Julian[x] expresses it: nor do these notices take their rise from state-policy; or are the effects of that originally: if this was the case, if it was the contrivance of politicans to keep men in awe, and under subjection, it must be the contrivance of one man, or more united together. If of one, say, who is the man? in what age he lived, and where? and what is his name, or his sons names? If of more, say, when and where they existed? and who they were that met together? and where they formed this scheme? And let it be accounted for, if it can; that such a number of sage and wise men, who have been in the world; that no man should be able to get into the secret, and detect the fallacy and discover it, and free men from the imposition. Besides, these notices appeared before any scheme of politics was formed; or kings or civil magistrates were in being. Plato[y] has refused this notion; and represents it as a very pestilent one, both in private and in public. Nor are these notices by tradition from one to another; since traditions are peculiar to certain people: the Jews had theirs, and so had the Gentiles; and particular nations among them had separate ones from each other; but these are common to all mankind: nor do they spring from a slavish fear and dread of punishment; for though it has been said[z], that fear makes gods, or produces a notion of Deity; the contrary is true, that Deity produces fear, as will be seen in a following argument.

Under this head may be observed the innate desires of men after happiness, which are so boundless as not to be satisfied. Let a man have ever so great a compass of knowledge and understanding; or possess ever so large a portion of wealth and riches; or be indulged with the gratification of his senses to the highest degree; or enjoy all the pleasure the whole creation can afford him; yet after all, according to the wise man, the conclusion of the whole is, *all is vanity and vexation of spirit*, Eccles. ii. 17. Now these desires are not in vain implanted, there muſt be an object answerable unto them; a perfect Being, which is no other than God, who is the first cause and last end of all things, of whom the Psalmist says, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth my soul desires besides thee*, Psalm lxxiii. 25.

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[w] Apud Ciceron. de Natura Deorum, l. 1. [x] Apud Grotium de jure Belli, l. 2. c. 20. s. 45. Annotat. in ibid. p. 384. [y] De Legibus, l. 10. p. 948. [z] Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor, Statii Thebaid. l. 3. v. 661.

The third argument proving the Being of God, shall be taken from the works of creation; concerning which the apostle says, *the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen; being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead*, Rom. i. 20. Plutarch[a], in answer to a question, Whence have men the knowledge of God? replies, "They first receive the knowledge of him from the beauty of things that appear; for nothing beautiful is made in vain, nor by chance, but wrought with some art: that the world is beautiful, is manifest from the figure, the colour, and magnitude of it; and from the variety of stars about the world." And these so clearly display the Being and power of God, as to leave the heathen without excuse, as the apostle observes; and as this, and other instances, shew. Most admirable was the reasoning of a wild Greenlander[b], which he declared to a commissionary to be the reasoning of his mind before his conversion; "It is true, said he to him, we were ignorant heathens, and knew nothing of God, or a Saviour; and, indeed, who should tell us of him till you come? but thou must not imagine that no Greenlander thinks about these things. I myself have often thought: a kajak (a boat) with all its tackle and implements, does not grow into existence of itſelf, but must be made by the labour and ingenuity of man; and one that does not understand it, would directly spoil it. Now the meanest bird has far more skill displayed in its structure, than the best kajak; and no man can make a bird: But there is still a far greater art shewn in the formation of a man, than of any other creature. Who was it that made him? I bethought me that he proceeded from his parents, and they from their parents; but some must have been the first parents; whence did they come? common report informs me, they grew out of the earth: but if so, why does it not still happen that men grow out of the earth? and from whence did this same earth itself, the sea, the sun, the moon, and stars, arise into existence? Certainly there must be some Being who made all these things; a Being that always was, and can never cease to be. He must be inexpressibly more mighty, knowing, and wise, than the wisest man. He must be very good too, because that every thing that he has made is good, useful, and necessary for us. Ah, did I but know him, how would I love him and honour him! But who has seen him? who has ever conversed with him? None of us poor men. Yet there may be men too that know something of him. O that I could but speak with such! therefore, said he, as soon as ever I heard you speak of this great Being, I believed it directly, with all my heart; because I had so long desired to hear it." A glaring proof this, that a supreme Being, the first cause of all things, is to be concluded from the works of creation. The notion of the eternity of the world, has been imbibed by some heathens, but sufficiently confuted by others. And even Aristotle, to whom it is ascribed, asserts[c] that "it was an ancient doctrine, and what all men received from their ancestors; that all things are of God, and consist by him." And those that believe the divine revelation, cannot admit of any other doctrine; but must explode the notion of the eternity of the world, and of its being of itself; since that assures us, that *in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth:* also that all things were made, *not of things which do appear*, but out of nothing, Gen. i. 1. Heb. xi. 3. for, be it, that the heavens and the earth were made out of a chaos, or out of preexistent matter; it may be reasonably asked, out of what was the preexistent matter made? the answer must be, out of nothing: since it was by creation, which is the production of something out of nothing; and which can never be performed by the creature; for out of nothing, nothing can be made by that. If therefore all things are originally produced out of nothing, it must be by one that is almighty, whom we rightly call God: No creature can produce itself; this involves such contradictions as can never be admitted; for then a creature must be before it was; as that which makes must be before that which is made: it must act and operate before it exists; and be and not be at one and the same time; which are such glaring contradictions, as sufficiently confute the creature's making itself; and therefore its being must be owing to another cause; even to God, the Creator; for between a creature and God, there is no medium: and if it could be thought or said, that the most excellent creatures, men, made themselves; besides the above contradictions, which would be implied, it might be asked, why did not they make themselves wiser and better; since it is certain, they have knowledge of beings superior to them? and how is it that they know so little of themselves, either of their bodies or their souls, if both were made by them? and why are they not able to preserve themselves from a dissolution to which they are all subject? It may be further observed; that effects, which depend upon causes in subordination to one another, cannot be traced up *ad infinitum*[d]; but must be reduced to some first cause, where the inquiry must rest; and that first cause is God. Now here is an ample field to survey; which furnishes out a variety of objects, and all proofs of Deity. There is nothing in the whole creation the mind can contemplate, the eye look upon, or the hand lay hold on, but what proclaims the Being of God. When we look up to the heavens[e] above us; the surrounding atmosphere; the air in which we breathe, which compresses our earth, and keeps it together; the fluid æther, and spreading sky, bespangled with stars of light, and adorned with the two great luminaries, the sun and moon, especially the former, that inexaustible fountain of light and heat; and under whose benign influences, so many things are brought forth on earth; whose circuit is from one end of the heaven to the other; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof: when we consider its form, magnitude, and virtue; its proper distance from us, being not so near us as to scorch us; nor so remote as to be of no use to us; the motion given it at first, in which it has proceeded without stopping, but once as is supposed, in the days of Joshua; a motion it has had now almost six thousand years; the course it has steered, and steers, so that all parts of the earth, at one season or another, receive benefit by it; and the way it has been guided in, without varying or erring from it all this while. Whoever reflects on these things, must acknowledge it to be the work of an all-wise and almighty agent, we call God; and that it must be upheld, guided and directed by his hand alone. When we take a view of the earth, of the whole terraqueous globe, hanging on nothing, like a ball in the air, poized with its own weight; the different parts of it, and all disposed for the use of man; stored with immense riches in the bowels of it, and stocked with inhabitants upon it; the various sorts of animals, of different forms and shapes, made, some for strength, some for swiftness, some for bearing burdens, and others for drawing carriages, some for food, and others for cloathing: the vast variety of the feathered tribes that cut the air; and the innumerable kinds of fishes that swim the ocean. The consideration of all this will oblige us to say, *Lord, thou art God*; which hast made *the heaven, earth, and sea*; *and all that in them is*, Acts. iv. 25. in short, there is not a shell in the ocean; nor a sand on the shore, nor a spire of grass in the field, nor any flower of different hue and smell in the garden, but what declare the Being of God: but especially our own composition is deserving of our notice; the fabric of the body, and the faculties of our souls. The body; its form and shape; whilst other animals look downwards to the earth, *os homini sublime dedit Deus*, as the poet says[f], man as a lofty countenance given him, to behold the heavens, to lift up his face to the stars; and for what is this erect posture given him, but to adore his Creator? And it is remarkable that there is a natural instinct in men to lift up their hands and eyes to heaven, when either they have received any unexpected mercy, by way of thankfulness for it; or are in any great distress, as supplicating deliverance from it: which supposes a divine Being, to whom they owe the one, and from whom they expect the other. The several parts and members of the body are so framed and disposed, as to be subservient to one another; so that the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor the head to the feet, I have no need of you. The same may be observed of the other members. The inward parts, which are weak and tender, and on which life much depends, were they exposed, would be liable to much danger and hurt; but these are cloathed with skin and flesh, and fenced with bones and sinews; and every bone, and every nerve, and every muscle, are put in their proper places. All the organs of the senses, of sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, are most wonderfully fitted for the purposes for which they are made. Galen an ancient noted physician, being atheistically inclined, was convinced of his impiety by barely considering the admirable structure of the eye; its various humours, tunics, and provision for its defence and safety. The various operations performed in our bodies, many of which are done without our knowledge or will, are enough to raise the highest admiration in us; as the circulation of the blood through all parts of the body, in a very small space of time; the respiration of the lungs; the digestion of the food; the chylification of it; the mixing of the chyle with the blood; the nourishment thereby communicated; and which is sensibly perceived in the several parts of the body, and even in the more remote; which having been weakened and enfeebled by hunger, thirst, and labour, are in an instant revived and strengthened; and the accretion and growth of parts by all this. To which may be added other things worthy of notice; the faculty of speech, peculiar to man, and the organs of it; the features of their faces; and the shape of their bodies, which all differ from one another; the constant supply of animal spirits; the continuance of the vital heat, which outlasts fire itself; the slender threads and small fibres spread throughout the body, which hold and perform their office seventy or eighty years running: all which, when considered, will oblige us to say, with the inspired Psalmist, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*; *marvellous are thy works*; *and that my soul knoweth right well:* and will lead us to ascribe this curious piece of workmanship to no other than to the divine Being, the God of all flesh living[g].

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[a] De Placitis Philoſoph. l. 1. c. 6. p. 879. [b] Crantz's History of Greenland, ut ſupra.

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[c] De Mundo, c. 6. [d] αμφοτερως δε αδυνατον εις απειρον ιεναι, Aristot. Metaphysic. l. 2. c. 2.

[e] Quis est tam vecors, qui aut cum suspexerit in coelum deos esse non sentiat. Cicero. Orat. 30. De Harusp. resp. So Plato de Legibus, l. 12. p. 999. Zaleucus apud Diodor. Sicul. l. 12. p. 84. Ed. Rhodoman.

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[f] Ovid. Metamorph. l. 1. fab. 2. v. 84, 85. Vid. Ciceronem de Natura Deorum, l. 2. Hence the Greeks call man ἄνθρωπος, from his looking upwards, Lactant. de Orig. err. l. 2. c. 1.

But the soul of man, the more noble part of him, more fully discovers the original author of him[h]; being possessed of such powers and faculties that none but God could give: it is endowed with an understanding, capable of receiving and framing ideas of all things knowable, in matters natural, civil, and religious; and with reason, to put these together, and compare them with each other, and discourse concerning them; infer one thing from another, and draw conclusions from them: and with judgment, by which it passes sentence on things it takes cognizance of, and reasons upon; and determines for itself what is right or wrong; and so either approves or disapproves: it has a mind susceptive of what is proposed unto it; it can, by instruction or study, learn any language; cultivate any art and science; and, with the help of some geographical principles, can travel over the globe, can be here and there at pleasure, in the four parts of the world; and in a short time, visit every city of note therein, and describe the situation of every country, with their religion, manners, customs, &c. it can reflect on things past, and has a foresight of, and can forecast and provide for things to come: it has a will, to accept or reject, to embrace or refuse, what is proposed unto it; with the greatest freedom of choice, and with the most absolute power and sovereignty: It has affections, of love and hatred, joy and grief, hope and fear, &c. according to the different objects it is conversant with. There is also the conscience, which is to a man as a thousand witnesses, for him or against him; which, if it performs its office as it should do, will accuse him when he does ill, and commend, or excuse him, when he does well; and from hence arise either peace of mind, or dread of punishment, in some shape or another, either here or hereafter: To which may be added, the memory, which is a storehouse of collections of things thought to be most valuable and useful; where they are laid up, not in a confused, but orderly manner; so as to be called for and taken out upon occasion: here men of every character and profession lay up their several stores, to have recourse unto, and fetch out, as their case and circumstances may require. And besides this, there is the fancy or imagination, which can paint and describe to itself, in a lively manner, objects presented to it, and it has entertained a conception of; yea, it can fancy and imagine things that never were, nor never will be: and, to observe no more, there is the power of invention; which in some is more, in others less fertile; which, on a sudden, supplies with what is useful in case of an emergency. But above all, the soul of man is that wherein chiefly lay the image and likeness of God, when man was in his pure and innocent state; and though it is now sadly depraved by sin, yet it is capable of being renewed by the spirit of God, and of having the grace of God implanted in it, and is endowed with immortality, and cannot die: now to whom can such a noble and excellent creature as this owe its original, but to the divine Being, who may, with great propriety be called, the Father of spirits, the Lord, the Jehovah, who formeth the spirit of man within him.

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[g] See an excellent treatise of Dr. Nieuwentyt, called, The Religious Philosopher; in which the Being and Perfections of God are demonstrated from the works of creation, in a very great variety of instances. [h] So Plato proves the Being of God from the soul of man, de Legibus, p. [illegible]

The fourth argument will be taken from the sustentation and government of the world; the provision made for the supply of creatures, and especially of man, and for his safety. As the world, as we have seen, is made by a divine Being, so by him it consists. Was there not such an almighty Being, "who upholds all things by the word of his power," they would sink and fall. Did he not bear up the pillars of the earth, they would tremble and shake, and not be able to bear its weight: the most stately, firm, and well-built palace, unless repaired and maintained, will fall to decay and ruin; and so the grand and magnificent building of this world, would soon be dissolved, did not the divine agent that made it, keep it up: as he that built all things is God, so he that supports the fabric of the universe must be so too; no less than an almighty hand can preserve and continue it; and which has done it, without any visible appearance of age or decay, for almost six thousand years; and though there is such a vast number of creatures in the world, besides men, the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills," the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea; there is food provided for them all, and they have "every one their portion of meat in due season:" and as for man, he is richly provided for, with a plenty and variety of all good things; not only for necessity, but for delight; every man has a trade, business, and employment of life; or is put into such a situation and circumstances, that, with care, diligence, and industry, he may have enough for himself and family, and to spare: the earth produces a variety of things for food and drink for him; and of others for medicine, for the continuance of health, and restoration of it. And can all this be without the care, providence, and interposition of a wise and almighty Being?

Can these ever be thought to be the effects of blind chance and fortune? Is it not plain and clear, that God hereby "has not left himself without a witness of his existence, and providence, in that he does good to all his creatures, and gives rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons; filling mens hearts with food and gladness;" and continuing the certain and constant revolutions of "summer and winter, seed-time and harvest;" as well as night and day, cold and heat; all which have their peculiar usefulness and advantages to human life; and cannot be attributed to any thing else than the superintendency of the divine Being.

And as there is a provision made for the wants of men, so for their safety: were it not that God had put the fear of man upon the wild beasts of the field, and the dread of him in them, there would be no safety for him, especially in some parts of the world; and had he not put a natural instinct into them to avoid the habitations of men, and to resort to woods and desarts, and dwell in uninhabited places; to prowl about for their prey in the night, and in the morning return to their caves and dens, and lurking-places; when men go forth to their work, they would be in the utmost danger of their lives: yea, were it not for the overruling providence of God, which governs the world, and restrains the lusts of men, *homo esset homini lupus*; "one man would be a wolf to another;" neither life nor property would be secure; but must fall a prey to the rapine and violence of powerful oppressors. Human laws, and civil magistracy, do something to restrain men, but not every thing; notwithstanding these, we see what outrages are committed; and how greater still would be their number, was it not for the interposition of divine providence: and even it is owing to a divine Being that there are human forms of government, and political schemes framed, and laws made for the better regulation of mankind, and these continued; for it is by him kings reign, and princes decree justice: and particularly, was it not for a divine agency, such is the rage and malice of Satan, and his principalities and powers, whose numbers fill the surrounding air; and who go about our earth like roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour; were they not chained by almighty power, and limited by the providence of God, the whole race of men would be destroyed by them, at least the godly among them.

The fifth argument may be taken from the uncommon heroic actions, prodigies, wonders, and miraculous things done in the world; which cannot be thought to be done without a superior and divine influence. Heroic actions, such as that of Abraham, who, with three hundred houshold-servants, pursued after, and engaged with four kings who had beaten five before, and recovered the goods they had taken away: of Shamgar, who fought with and killed six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad: and of Samson, who slew a thousand of them with the jawbone of an ass: of Jonathan, and his armour-bearer, who attacked and took a garrison of the same people, and threw a whole army of theirs into a panic and confusion; who had been for some time a terror to the whole land of Israel: and of David, a stripling, fighting with and conquering Goliath, a monstrous giant. These are scripture-instances; and if scripture is only regarded as a common history, these merit our notice and credit, as any of the relations in profane history; in which are recorded the magnanimous actions of heroes, kings, and generals of armies; their wonderful successes, and amazing conquests; as of the Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, and Romans; which made such strange revolutions and changes in kingdoms and states; all which can never be supposed to be done without superior power, and the overruling, influencing providence of the divine Being; who inspired men to do things beyond their natural skill and courage: prodigies, strange and wonderful events; for which no natural cause can be assigned; such as the strange sights seen in the air, and voices heard in the temple, before the destruction of Jerusalem; with other things, related by Josephus[i], and confirmed by Tacitus[k], an heathen historian; to which might be added, many others, which histories abound with: but besides these, things really miraculous have been wrought, such as are not only out of, and beyond the course of nature, but contrary to it, and to the settled laws of it; such as the miracles of Moses and the prophets, and of Christ and his apostles; which are recorded in the scriptures; and others in human writings; which are so well attested as oblige us to give credit to them: now, though these were not done to prove a divine Being; which needs them not; yet they necessarily suppose one, by whose power alone they are performed.

The sixth argument may be formed from the prophecies of contingent future events, and the exact fulfilment of them. This is what is challenged and required from heathen deities, to prove their right to such a character; as being what none but God can do: Let them bring forth and shew us what shall happen: or declare us things for to come: shew the things that are to come hereafter; that we may know that ye are gods[l]: which is what none but the true God can do, and has done; and which being done, proves there is a God, and one that is truly so; instances of which there are many in the sacred writings; prophecies which relate both to particular persons and to whole kingdoms and states; which have had their exact accomplishment; but not to insist on these, since those who are atheistically inclined, disbelieve the divine revelation; let it be observed, that the heathens have had their auguries, soothsayings, divinations, and oracles; by which pretentions have been made to foretel future events. That there is such a thing as divination, is said to be confirmed by the consent of all nations; and is explained of a presension and knowledge of future things[m]: now this being granted, it may be reasoned upon, that if there is a foretelling of future things, which certainly come to pass, there must be a God; since none but an omniscient Being can, with certainty, foretel what shall come to pass, which does not depend on necessary causes, and cannot be foreseen by the quickest sight, and sharpest wit, and sagacity of a creature.

The seventh argument may be urged from the fears of men, and the tortures of a guilty conscience, and the dread of a future state. Some are terribly affrighted at thunder and lightening, as Caligula, the Roman Emperor, used to be; who, at such times, would hide himself in, or under his bed; and yet this man set himself up for a god. Now these fears and frights are not merely on account of the awful sound of the thunder, and the dreadful flashes of lightening; but because of the divine and tremendous Being who is supposed to send them: the Heathens were sensible that thunder is the voice of God, as the scriptures represent it, and therefore called their Jove, *Jupiter tonans*; "the thundering Jupiter." Many have been so terrified in their consciences on account of sin, that they could get no rest, nor enjoy peace any where, or by any means: as Cain, under the terrors of an evil conscience, fancied that "every one that found him would slay him:" and those wicked traitors, Catiline and Jugurtha; and those wicked emperors, those monsters in impiety, Tiberius and Nero[n], and especially the latter, who was so tortured in his conscience, as if he was continually haunted by his mother's ghost, and by furies with burning torches: and Hobbes, our English atheist, as he was reckoned, was wont to be very uneasy when alone in the dark: and Epicurus, the philosopher, though he taught men to despise death, and out-brave it; yet, when he perceived that he himself was about to die, was most terribly frighted; and this has been the case of many others: bold and strong spirits, as atheistical persons love to be called, have been sometimes found to be very timorous and fearful. And, indeed, this is natural to all men, and which is a proof of a superior Being. Thus a wild Greenlander[o] argued, before he had knowledge of the true God: "Man has an intelligent soul, is subject to no creature in the world; and yet man is afraid of the future state: who is it that he is afraid of there? That must be a great Spirit that has dominion over us. O did we but know him! O had we but him for our friend!" Now what do all these fears and tortures of conscience arise from, but from the guilt of sin, and a sense of a divine Being; who is above men, and will call them to an account for their sins, and take vengeance on them? And, indeed, the eternal punishment that will be inflicted on them, will greatly lie in the tortures of their conscience, which is the worm that will never die; and, in a sense of divine wrath, which is that fire that will never be quenched.

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[i] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 5. s. 3. [k] Hist. l. 5. c. 13. [l] Isaiah xli. 21, 22. [m] Cicero de Divinatione, l. 1. c. 1. & de Legibus, l. 2.

The eighth and last argument shall be taken from the judgments in the world; not only famine, sword, pestilence, earthquakes, &c. but such that have been inflicted on wicked men, atheistical persons, perjured ones, blasphemers, and the like. Not to take notice of the universal flood, which swept away a world of ungodly men; and of the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, with other cities of the plain, by fire and brimstone from heaven; which yet are abundantly confirmed by the testimonies of heathen writers; nor of the awful instances in the New Testament, of Herod being smitten by an angel, and eaten of worms, and died, while the people was shouting him as a God, and he assented to their flattery; and of Ananias and Sapphira, being struck dead for lying unto God: besides these, there are innumerable instances of judgments, of the same, or a like kind, in all ages and countries, recorded in the histories of them; and in our nation, and in our age, and within our knowledge; and who now can hear or read such awful judgments, and disbelieve the Being of God?

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[n] Sueton. Vita Tiberii, c. 67. & Nero. c. 34. Tacit. Annal. l. 6. c. 9.

[o] Crantz's History of Greenland, ut ſupra.

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

As what I shall say hereafter concerning God, his essence, perfections, persons, works, and worship, and every thing relative to him, will be taken out of the sacred scriptures, and proved by them; it will be necessary, before I proceed any farther, to secure the ground I go upon; and establish the divine authority of them; and shew that they are a perfect, plain, and sure rule to go by; and are the standard of faith and practice; and to be read constantly, studied diligently, and consulted with on all occasions.

By the Scriptures, I understand the books of the Old and of the New Testament. The books of the Old Testament, are the five books of Moses; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, sometimes called the Pentateuch; the historical books, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the two books of Samuel, the two of Kings, the two of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther; the poetical books, Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song; the prophetic books, the larger Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, with the Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel; the lesser Prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The books of the New Testament, the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles; the fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul; one of James; two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude, and the Revelation. These books are commonly called Canonical Scripture, because they have always been received by the church into the canon, or rule of faith. The books of the Old Testament, by the Jewish church; with which entirely agree Josephus's account of them, and the catalogue of them brought from the East, by Melito; and the books of both Testaments agree with the account which Origen gives of them in his time, and which have always been acknowledged by the christian church; and which testimony of both churches, respecting them, deserves our regard, and tends to corroborate their divine authority. Now these are the books which the apostle calls, all Scripture, or the whole of Scripture, said by him to be given by inspiration of God: which include not only the books of the Old Testament, which had been long in being in his time; but the books of the New Testament, which were all of them then written, excepting the book of the Revelation; since these words of his stand in an epistle supposed to be the last that was written by him; and however what is said by him is true of what might be written afterwards, for the uses he mentions, as well as before.

From these must be excluded, as un-canonical, the books that bear the name of Apocrypha; which are sometimes bound up with the Bible, to the great scandal and disgrace of it; for though there may be some things in them worthy to be read, as human writings; there is such a mixture of falshood and impiety, that they cannot by any means be allowed to be placed upon an equality with the sacred scriptures. Likewise all such spurious books falsely ascribed to the apostles, or to some of the first christians; as, The Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus; The Constitutions of the Apostles; Hermes's pastor, &c. which carry in them manifest marks of imposture. To which may be added, all human and unwritten traditions, pleaded for by the papists; and all dreams and visions, and pretended revelations and prophecies, delivered out in later ages, by enthusiastic persons. Blessed be God, we have a more sure word of prophecy to attend unto; concerning which, I shall,

I. Observe the divine authority of the Scriptures, or shew, that they are from God, or inspired by him; they lay in a claim to a divine original; and the claim is just, as will be seen. They are called the law, or doctrine of the Lord; the testimony of the Lord; the statutes of the Lord; the commandment of the Lord; the fear of the Lord; and the judgments of the Lord; by the Psalmist David, Psal. ix. 7—9. And the Prophets frequently introduce their prophecies and discourses, by saying, *The word of the Lord came* to them; and with a, *Thus saith the Lord*, Isa. i. 10. Jer. ii. 1, 2. And our Lord expressly calls the scripture the word of God, John x. 35. as it is also called, Heb. iv. 12. And which God " at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake by the prophets;" and by his Son, and his apostles, in later times, chap. i. 1, 2. And is represented as the oracles of God, and may be safely consulted and depended on; and according to which men are to speak, Rom. iii. 2. 1 Pet. i. 11. But before I proceed any further, in the proof of the divinity of the sacred Scriptures, I shall premise the following things.

1. That when we say that the Scriptures are the word of God, or that this word is of God; we do not mean that it was spoken with an articulate voice by him; or written immediately by the finger of God: the law of the Decalogue, or the Ten Commands, indeed, were articulately spoken by him, and the writing of them, was the writing of God, Exod. xx. 1. and xxxi. 18. and xxxii. 15. in which he might set an example to his servants, in after times, to write what might be suggested to them by him; that it might remain to be read: it is enough, that they were bid to write what he delivered to them, as Moses and others were ordered to do, Deut. xxxi. 19. Jer. xxx. 2. Hab. ii. 2. Rev. i. 11. 19. and what was ordered by the Lord to be written, it is the same as if it was written by himself; and especially since the penmen wrote as they were directed, dictated and inspired by him, and " spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" for they did not speak and write of their own head, and out of their own brains, nor according to their will, and when and what they pleased; but according to

he will of God, and what he suggested to them, and when he inspired them,
Pet. i. 21.

II. Not all that is contained in the scriptures is of God. Some are the
rords of others; yea, some are the speeches of Satan, and very bad ones too;
s when he suggested that Job was not a sincere worshipper of God; and re-
uested he might have leave to do an injury both to his property and to his per-
on, Job. 1. 9—11. and ii. 4—6. So when he tempted our Lord, and moved
im to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, and destroy himself;
nd not succeeding in that, urged him to fall down and worship him, Matt. iv.
, 9. But now the penmen of these books, in which these speeches are, were
noved and directed by the Lord to commit them to writing; so that though they
hemselves are not the word of God; yet that they are written, and are on re-
ord, is of God; and which was directed to, and done, to shew the malice, pride,
lasphemy, and impiety, of that wicked spirit. There are also speeches of bad
nen, as of Cain, Pharaoh, and others, ordered to be written, to discover the
nore the corruption of human nature: and even of good men, as of Moses, Da-
id, Jonah, and particularly the friends of Job, and their long discourses, in
which they said not that which was right of God, as Job did; and he himself
id not say in every speech of his what was right of God; though he said more
nd what was righter, than they did; and yet these speeches are on record, by
ivine order; to prove matters of fact, to shew the weaknesses and frailties of
he best of men. Some of the writers of the Scriptures, as Moses, and the his-
orical ones, being eye and ear witnesses of many things they wrote, could have
wrote them of their own knowledge, and out of their own memories; and
thers they might take out of diaries, annals, and journals, of their own and
ormer times; yet in all they wrote, they were under the impulse and direction
f God; what to leave, and what to take and insert into their writings, and trans-
nit to posterity. So that all they wrote may be truly said to be by divine au-
hority. In the writings and discourses of the apostle Paul, are several quota-
ions out of heathen authors; one out of Aratus, when he was discoursing be-
fore the wise men at Athens; *as certain*, says he, *of your own poets have said,
for we are also his offspring*, Acts xvii. 28. Another out of Menander; *Evil
communications corrupt goood manners*, 1 Cor. xv. 33. And another out of
Epimenides, a poet of Crete, a testimony of his against the Cretians, who said
they were, always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies; which were produced *ad ho-
minem*, for greater conviction; and which he was directed to quote and write in
his epistles and discourses, for that reason. So that though the words are not of
God, yet that they were quoted and written, was of God.

III. Let it be observed, that not the matter of the scriptures only, but the ve-
ry words in which they are written, are of God. Some who are not for or-
ganical inspiration, as they call it, think that the sacred writers were only fur-
nished of God with matter, and had general ideas of things given them, and

were left to clothe them with their own words, and to use their own stile; which they suppose accounts for the difference of stile to be observed in them: but if this was the case, as it sometimes is with men, that they have clear and satisfactory ideas of things in their own minds, and yet are at a loss for proper words to express and convey the sense of them to others; so it might be with the sacred writers, if words were not suggested to them, as well as matter; and then we should be left at an uncertainty about the real sense of the holy spirit, if not led into a wrong one; it seems, therefore, most agreeable, that words also, as well as matter, were given by divine inspiration: and as for difference of stile, as it was easy with God to direct to the use of proper words, so he could accommodate himself to the stile such persons were wont to use, and which was natural to them, and agreeable to their genius and circumstances; and this may be confirmed from the testimonies of the writers themselves: says David, one of the writers of the Old Testament, *The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. And the apostle Paul speaks of himself, and other inspired apostles of the New Testament, *Which things*, says he, *we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, 1 Cor. ii. 13. and it is the writing, or the word of God as written, that is, *by inspiration of God*, 2 Tim. iii. 16. But then,

IV. This is to be understood of the scriptures, as in the original languages in which they were written, and not of translations; unless it could be thought, that the translators of the Bible into the several languages of the nations into which it has been translated, were under the divine inspiration also in translating, and were directed of God to the use of words they have rendered the original by; but this is not reasonable to suppose. The books of the Old Testament were written chiefly in the Hebrew language, unless some few passages in Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, and Esther, in the Chaldee language; and the New Testament in Greek: in which languages they can only be reckoned canonical and authentic; for this is like the charters and diplomas of princes; the wills or testaments of men; or any deeds made by them; only the original exemplar is authentic; and not translations, and transcriptions, and copies of them, though ever so perfect; and to the Bible, in its original languages, is every translation to be brought, and by it to be examined, tried and judged, and to be corrected and amended: and if this was not the case, we should have no certain and infallible rule to go by; for it must be either all the translations together, or some one of them; not all of them, because they agree not in all things: not one; for then the contest would be between one nation and another which it should be, whether English, Dutch, French, &c. and could one be agreed upon, it could not be read and understood by all: so the papists, they plead for their vulgate Latin version; which has been decreed authentic by the council of Trent; though it abounds with innumerable errors and mistakes; nay, so far do they carry this affair, that they even assert that the scriptures, in their originals, ought to submit to, and be corrected by their version; which is absurd and ridiculous. Let not now any e uneasy in their minds about translations on this account, because they are ot upon an equality with the original text, and especially about our own; for s it has been the will of God, and appears absolutely necessary that so it should e, that the Bible should be translated into different languages, that all may read t, and some particularly may receive benefit by it; he has taken care, in his rovidence, to raise up men capable of such a performance, in various nations, nd particularly in ours; for whenever a set of men have been engaged in this ork, as were in our nation, men well skilled in the languages, and partakers f the grace of God; of sound principles, and of integrity and faithfulness, aving the fear of God before their eyes; they have never failed of producing translation worthy of acceptation; and in which, though they have mistook ome words and phrases, and erred in some lesser and lighter matters; yet not o as to affect any momentous article of faith or practice; and therefore such ranslations as ours may be regarded as the rule of faith. And if any scruple hould remain on the minds of any on this account, it will be sufficient to remove it, when it is observed, that the scriptures, in our English translation, have een blessed of God, either by reading them in it, or by explaining them according to it, for the conversion, comfort, and edification of thousands and housands. And the same may be said of all others, so far as they agree with he original, that they are the rule of faith and practice, and alike useful.

Here I cannot but observe the amazing ignorance and stupidity of some perons, who take it into their heads to decry learning and learned men; for what would they have done for a Bible, had it not been for them as instruments? and f they had it, so as to have been capable of reading it, God must have wrought miracle for them; and continued that miracle in every nation, in every age, nd to every individual; I mean the gift of tongues, in a supernatural way, as was bestowed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; which there is no reason in the world ever to have expected. Bless God, therefore, and be thankful that God has, in his providence, raised up such men to translate the Bible into the mother tongue of every nation, and particularly into ours; and that he till continues to raise up such who are able to defend the translation made, against erroneous persons, and enemies of the truth; and to correct and amend it in lesser matters, in which it may have failed, and clear and illustrate it by their learned notes upon it. Having premised these things, I now proceed to prove the claim of the scriptures to a divine authority, which may be evinced from the following things.

1. From the subject-matter of them. — 1. In general there is nothing in them unworthy of God; nothing contrary to his truth and faithfulness, to his purity and holiness, to his wisdom and goodness, or to any of the perfections of his nature; there is no falshood nor contradiction in them; they may with great propriety be called, as they are, the Scriptures of truth, and the word of truth, Dan. x. 21. Eph. i. 13. There is nothing impious or impure, absurd or ridiculous in them; as in the Al-koran of Mahomet; which is stuffed with impu-

rities and impieties, as well as with things foolish and absurd: or as in the Pagan treatises of their gods; which abound with tales of their murders, adulteries. and thefts; and the impure rites and ceremonies, and inhuman sacrifices used in the worship of them. — 2. The things contained in the Scriptures are pure and holy: the holy Spirit dictated them, holy men spoke and wrote them, and they are justly called holy Scriptures, Rom. i. 2. and plainly shew they came from the holy God. The doctrines of them are holy; they are doctrines according to godliness, and tend to promote it; they teach and influence men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly: they are indeed, by some ignorant persons, charged with licentiousness; but the charge, as it is false, it is easily removed, by observing the nature of the doctrines, and the effects of them; the precepts the Scriptures enjoin, and the worship they require, are strictly holy; the law-part of them is holy, just, and good, Rom. vii. 12. It is holy in its own nature, and requires nothing but what is for the good of men, what is but a reasonable service to God, and what is just between man and man; it forbids whatever is evil, strikes at all sorts of sins, and sets them in a just light, exposes and condemns them. And hence it is that there is in natural men, whose carnal minds are enmity to God, such a backwardness, yea, an aversion to reading the Scriptures; because the doctrines and precepts of them are so pure and holy; they choose to read an idle romance, an impure novel, or any profane writings and histories, rather than the Bible; and from whence may be drawn, no inconsiderable argument in favour of their being of God. The stile of the Scriptures is pure and holy, chaste and clean, free from all levity and obscenity, and from every thing that might be offensive to the ear of the chaste and pious. And there are remarkable instances in the marginal readings of some passages in the Hebrew text, to prevent this; and care should be taken in all translations, to make use of language neat and clean; and keep up, as much as may be, to the original purity of the Scriptures. — 3. There are some things recorded in the Scriptures, which could never have been known but by revelation from God himself; as particularly with respect to the creation of the world, and the original of mankind; that the world was made out of nothing; when made, how, and in what form and order, and how long it was in making; who were the first parents of mankind, when, how, and of what made; hence, without this revelation, men have run into strange, absurd, and extravagant notions about these things. Yea, the Scriptures inform us what was done in eternity, which none but God himself could reveal, and make known to men; as the choice of men in Christ to everlasting salvation, which was from the beginning; not of their being, nor of their conversation, nor of time; but before time or they or the earth were, even "before the foundation of the world," Eph. i. 4. And also the council held between the divine persons, concerning the salvation of man; for as there was a consultation held about making him; so about saving him; which may be called the council of peace, Zach. vi. 13. When "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and the scheme of peace and reconciliation, and plan of salvation, were formed and agreed upon: so the covenant of grace made with Christ from eternity, on behalf of the chosen ones; whose "going forth in it were of old, from everlasting;" covenanting with his Father for them, and agreeing to be their Surety and Saviour; to become incarnate, and obey and suffer for them, and so work out the salvation of them; representing their persons and taking the charge and care of them, and of all blessings of grace given, and of all promises made to them, in him, before the world began; in which covenant he was set up as Mediator, "from everlasting, or ever the earth was," Prov. viii. 22, 23. Mic. v. 2. 2 Tim. i. 9. Eph. i. 3, 4. All which could never have been known unless God himself had revealed them. — 4. There are some things recorded in the Scriptures as future, which God only could foreknow would be, and foretel with certainty that they should be; and which have accordingly come to pass, and proves the revelation to be of God. Some of them relate to particular persons, and contingent events; as Josiah, who was prophesied of by name, as to be born to the house of David, three or four hundred years before his birth, and what he should do; "offer up the idolatrous priests on Jeroboam's altar, and burn mens bones on it;" all which exactly came to pass, see 1 Kings xiii. 2. compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 17, 20. Cyrus king of Persia also was prophesied of by name, more than two hundred years before his birth, and what he should do; what conquests he should make, what immense riches he should possess; and that he should let the captive Jews go free, without price or reward, and give orders for the rebuilding their temple; all which was punctually fulfilled, Isa. xliv. 28. and xlv. 1—3, 13. see Ezra i. 1—4. Others relate to kingdoms and states, and what should befal them; as the Egyptians, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Assyrians, Babylonians, and others; of whose destruction Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied, and who now are no more, have not so much as a name on earth: and particularly many things are foretold concerning the Jews; as their descent into Egypt, abode and bondage there, and coming from thence with great riches; which was made known to their great ancestor Abraham, before they were; Gen. xv. 14. see Exod. xii. 35—41. their captivity in Babylon, and return from thence after seventy years, Jer. xxix. 10, 11. see Dan. ix. 2. and all their miseries and afflictions in their last destruction, and present state, are prophetically described in Deut. xxviii. and their exact case, for about seventeen hundred years, is expressed in a few words; as well as their future conversion is prophesied of, Hos. iii. 4—5. But especially the prophecies concerning Christ, are worthy of notice; his incarnation and birth of a virgin; the place where he should be born; of what nation, tribe, and family; his sufferings and death, his burial, resurrection, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God: all which are plainly pointed out in prophecy; and which with many other things relating to him, have had their exact accomplishment in him. To which might be added, predictions of the calling of the Gentiles, by many of the prophets; and the abolition of paganism in the Roman empire; the rise, power, and ruin of antichrist; which are particularly spoken of in the book of the Revelation; great part of which prophetic book has been already fulfilled. — 5. There are some things in the Scriptures, which, though not contrary to reason, yet are above the capacity of men ever to have made a discovery of; as the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; whose distinct mode of subsisting is mysterious to us; the eternal generation of the Son of God, which is ineffable by us; his incarnation and birth of a virgin, under the power of the Holy Ghost, which is wonderful and amazing; the union of the human nature to his divine person; which is, "without controversy, the great mystery of godliness:" the regeneration of men by the Spirit of God, and the manner of his operation on the souls of men; which, on hearing of, made a master of Israel say, "How can these things be?" and the resurrection of the same body at the last day, reckoned by the Gentiles incredible; and which things, though revealed, are not to be accounted for upon the principles of nature and reason. — 6. The things contained in the scriptures, whether doctrines or facts, are harmonious; the doctrines, though delivered at sundry times, and in divers manners, are all of a piece; no yea and nay, no discord and disagreement among them; the two Testaments "are like two young roes that are twins;" to which some think they are compared in Cant. iv. 5. and vii. 3. and to the Cherubim over the mercy-seat, which were of one beaten piece, were exactly alike, and looked to one another, and both to the mercy-seat; a type of Christ, who is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, in which they unite, and both agree to lay; the apostle Paul said none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say should be. And as to historical facts, what seeming contradictions may be observed in any of them, are easily reconciled, with a little care, diligence, and study; and some of these arise from the carelessness of transcribers putting one word or letter for another; and even these instances are but few, and not very material; and which never affect any article of faith or practice: such care has divine providence taken of these peculiar and important writings, which with the harmony of them, shew them to be of God.

II. The stile and manner in which the Scriptures are written, is a further evidence of their divine original; the majesty in which they appear, the authoritative manner in which they are delivered; not asking, but demanding, attention and assent unto them; and which commands reverence and acceptance of them; the figures used to engage hereunto are inimitable by creatures; and such as would be daring and presumptuous for any but God to use, with whom is terrible Majesty; such as, *Hear, O heavens* and *I will speak*, Deut. xxxii. 1. Isa. i. 2. the sublimity of the stile is such as exceeds all other writings: Longinus, an heathen orator, who wrote upon the Sublime, admired some passages in the writings of Moses, particularly, Gen. i. 3. That early composition, the book of Job, abounds with such strong and lofty expressions as are not to be found in human writings, especially the speeches Jehovah himself delivered out of the whirlwind, chap. xxxviii, xxxix, xl, and xli. the book of Psalms is full of bright figures and inimitable language, particularly see Psal. xviii. 7—15. and xxix. 3—10. and cxiii. 3—8. and cxxxix. 7—12. The prophecies of Isaiah are fraught with a rich treasure of divine elocution, which surpasses all that is to be met with in the writings of men; and it is remarkable that in some of the inspired writers, who have been bred up in a rustic manner, are found some of the most grand images, and lively picturesques, and highest flights of language, as in Amos the herdman, chap. iv. 13. and ix. 2, 6.

III. Another argument for the divine authority of the Scriptures may be taken from the penmen and writers of them. — 1. Many of these were men of no education, in a low station of life, and were taken from the flock, or from the herd, or from their nets, or other mean employments; and what they wrote both as to matter and manner, were above and beyond their ordinary capacities, and therefore must be of God; what they wrote could not be of themselves; but they "spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." — 2. They lived in different times and places, and were of different interests and capacities, and in different conditions and circumstances; and yet they were all of the same sentiment, they speak and write the same things, deliver out the same truths and doctrines, and enjoin the same moral duties of religion, and the same positive precepts, according the different dispensations under which they were; and this shews that they were dictated, and influenced in all, by the same Spirit of God. — 3. They were holy and good men, partakers of the grace of God; and therefore could never give into an imposture, nor deliver out a known lie, nor obtrude a falshood upon the world. — 4. They appear to be plain, honest, and faithful men; they conceal not their own failings and infirmities; so Moses published his own weaknesses and inadvertencies, and spared not the blemishes of his family; not of his more remote ancestor Levi, in the case of the Shechemites; nor of his immediate parents, their illegal marriage; nor of his favourite people the Israelites, their rebellion, and obstinacy, and idolatry: and the same may be observed of other inspired writers. — 5. They were disinterested men; they sought not popular applause, nor worldly wealth, nor to aggrandize themselves and their families. Moses, when it was offered to him, by the Lord, to make of him a great nation, and cut off the people of Israel for their sins, refused it more than once; prefering the public good of that people to his own advantage; and though he was king in Jeshurun, he was not careful to have any of his posterity to succeed him in his office; and though the priesthood was conferred on Aaron his brother, and his sons, yet no other provision was made for his own family, than to attend the lower services of the tabernacle in common with the rest of his tribe: and of this disposition were the apostles of Christ, who left all, and followed him; and sought not the wealth of men, nor honour from them; but, on the contrary, exposed themselves to reproach, poverty, vexation, and trouble; yea, to persecution, and death itself; which they would never have done, had they not been fully satisfied of their mission of God, and of their message from him; and therefore could not be deterred from speaking and writing in his name, by the terrors and menaces of men, and by all the afflictions, bonds, and persecution, and death in every shape, which awaited them. In short, the writers of the Scriptures seem to be men that neither could be imposed upon themselves, nor sought to impose on others; nor would it have been easy, had they been bad men, to have succeeded, had they attempted it.

IV. Another argument may be drawn from the many wonderful effects the sacred writings, attended with a divine power and influence, have had upon the hearts and lives of men. Many have been converted from error, superstition, and idolatry, and from a vicious course of life, to embrace and profess the truth, and to live a holy life and conversation, upon reading the scriptures, or hearing them explained; and even some of great natural parts and learning, who could not easily be prevailed upon to relinquish former tenets and practices, had they not had full and clear conviction of them. This "Word of God has been quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword;" it has pierced and penetrated into the recesses of the heart, and laid open the secrets of it; it has been the means of enlightening the mind, quickening the soul, regenerating and sanctifying the heart, and of producing faith, and every other grace in it, and of strengthening, comforting, and reviving the spirits of the people of God when in distress, by afflictions, or Satan's temptations; so that every good man has a testimony within himself of its divine authority, see 1 John v. 9, 10.

V. The testimony bore to the Scriptures by miracles, abundantly confirm the genuineness of them, and that they are of God; such as were done by Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, and by the apostles of the New; even such as are above, and contrary to the laws of nature, and are beyond the power of a creature to perform, and which only omnipotence itself could work: now these God would never do to establish the character of impostors, or to confirm a lie; which yet he has done to witness the truth of divine revelation; see Mark xvi. 20. Heb. ii. 3, 4.

VI. The hatred and opposition of men, and the enmity of devils, to them, afford no inconsiderable argument in favour of the divinity of them; for were they of men, they would not have such a disgust at them, and disapprobation of them, and make such opposition to them: by these are to be known the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error; what is of the world, and merely human, is approved by the men of the world; but what is of God, is rejected, 1 John iv. 5, 6. and if these writings were of Satan, and the work of forgery, imposture, and deceit, that wicked spirit would never have shewn such despite unto them, nor have taken such pains to tempt men, and prevail upon them not to read them; and to persuade others to use their utmost efforts to corrupt or destroy them, and root them out of the world.

VII. The awful judgment of God on such who have despised them, and have endeavoured to destroy them, are no mean evidence that they are of God; who hereby has shewn his resentment of such conduct and behaviour; which might be illustrated by the instances of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who cut to pieces the copies of the book of the law wherever he found them, and burnt them, and put to death all with whom they were, 1 Maccab. i. 59, 60. this man died of a violent disorder in his bowels, his body was covered with worms, his flesh flaked off, and was attended with an intollerable stench, 2 Maccab. ix. 5—9. and of Dioclesian, the Roman emperor, who by an edict, ordered all the sacred books to be burnt, that, if possible, he might root christianity out of the world; and once fancied that he had done it; but when he found he had not accomplished his design, through madness and despair, in the height of his imperial glory, abdicated the empire, and retired to a private life, and at last poisoned himself: the one shewed a despite to the books of the old Testament, the other more especially to the books of the New Testament; and both were highly resented by the divine Being, who hereby shewed himself the author of both. Many more instances might be produed, but these may suffice.

VIII. The antiquity and continuance of these writings may be improved into an argument in favour of them: Tertullian says, "That which is most ancient is most true." Men from the beginning had knowledge of God, and of the way of salvation, and in what manner God was to be worshipped; which could not be without a revelation; though for some time it was not delivered in writing. The antediluvian patriarchs had it, and so the post-diluvian ones, to the times of Moses; whose writings are the first, and are more ancient than any profane writings, by many hundred of years; the most early of that sort extant, are the poems of Homer and Hesiod, who flourished about the times of Isaiah; and the divine writings have been preserved notwithstanding the malice of men and devils, some of them some thousand of years, when other writings are lost and perished.

To which may be added, that the Scriptures receive no small evidence of the authority of them, from the testimonies of many heathen writers agreeing with them, with respect to the chronology, geography, and history of them; as concerning the creation of the world, Noah's flood, the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, the peopling the earth by the sons of Noah, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; with many other things respecting the people of Israel, their origin, laws, &c[p]. I go on to consider,

II. The perfection of the Scriptures. When we assert the perfection of them we do not mean that they contain a perfect account of all that God has done from the beginning of time, in the dispensations of his providence in the world, and in the distributions of his grace to the sons of men; though they relate much of the state and condition of the Church of God in all ages, and as it will be to the end of time. Nor that they contain all the discourses, exhortations, admonitions, cautions, and counsels of the prophets, delivered to the people of Israel, in the several ages of time: nor all the sermons of the apostles, which they preached to the Jews, and among the Gentiles: nor are all that were said and done by our Lord Jesus Christ recorded in them: there were many signs done by him which are not written, which if they should be written, as the evangelist observes, *even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written*, John xx. 30. and xxi. 25. But then they relate all things necessary to salvation, every thing that ought to be believed and done; and are a compleat, perfect standard of faith and practice: which may be proved,

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[p] See Gale's Court of the Gentiles.

I. From the author of them, who is God; they are the word of God, and are "given by inspiration of God;" as is asserted in them, and has been clearly shewn. Now since God is the author of them, who is a perfect Being, in whom is no darkness at all; not of ignorance, error, and imperfection; they coming from him, must be free from every thing of that kind; He is a rock, and his work is perfect; as his works of creation, providence, and redemption; so this work of the Scriptures.

II. From the name they go by, a Testament. We commonly divide the Scriptures into the Books of the Old Testament, and the Books of the New Testament; and that there was a first and a second Testament, an old and a new one, is plainly intimated, Heb. ix. 15. Now a man's testament, or will, contains the whole of his will and pleasure, concerning the disposition of his estate to whomsoever he pleases, or it is not properly his will and testament; a man's testament, if it be confirmed, as the apostle observes, *no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto*, Gal. iii. 15. Such the Scriptures are; they contain the whole will of God, about the disposition of the blessings of grace, and of the heavenly inheritance, to those who are appointed by him heirs; and being ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, are so sure and firm as not to be disanulled, and so perfect that nothing can be added thereunto.

III. From the epithet of perfect being expressly given unto them; *The law of the Lord is perfect*, Psal. xix. 7. which is to be understood, not of the Decalogue, or Ten Commands, but of the doctrine of the Lord, as the phrase signifies; even what was delivered in the sacred writings extant in the times of David; and if it was perfect then as to the substance of it, then much more must it appear so by the accession of the prophets, and the books of the New Testament since, in which there are plainer and clearer discoveries of the mind and will of God.

IV. From the essential parts of them, the Law and Gospel; to which two heads the substance of them may be reduced. The Law is a perfect rule of duty; it contains what is the *good, acceptable*, and *perfect will of God*, Rom. xii. 2. What he would have done, or not done; the whole duty of man, both towards God and man; all is comprehended in these two commands, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. *and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, Matt. xxii. 37—40. The Gospel is the perfect law, or doctrine of liberty, the apostle James speaks of, chap. i. 25. which proclaims the glorious liberty of the children of God by Christ; and it is perfect, it treats of perfect things; of perfect justification by Christ; of full pardon of sin through his blood, and compleat salvation in him; and contains a perfect plan of truth; every truth, "as it is in Jesus;" all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: It is the whole, or all the counsel of God, concerning the spiritual and eternal salvation of men, Acts xx. 27.

v. From the integral parts of them: the Scriptures, containing all the books that were written by divine inspiration. The books of the Old Testament were compleat and perfect in the times of Christ; not one was wanting, nor any mutilated and corrupted. The Jews, he says, have Moses and the prophets; and he himself, beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, *expounded in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself*, Luke xvi. 24. and xxiv. 27. So that they had not only the five books of Moses, but all the prophets, and all the scriptures of the Old Testament: nay, he affirms, that *till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*, Matt. v. 18. The Jews had the oracles of God committed to their care, Rom. iii. 2. and they have been faithful keepers of them; even some of them, to superstition and scrupulous nicety, numbering not only the books and sections, but also the verses, and even the words and letters: and there never was, nor now is, any reason to be given why they had corrupted, or would corrupt, any part of the Old Testament; on the coming of Christ it was not their interest to do it; and even before that it was translated into the Greek tongue, by which they would have been detected; and after the coming of Christ they could not do it if they would, copies of it being in the hands of Christians; who were able to correct what they should corrupt, had they done it: and whatever attempts may have been made by any under the christian name, to corrupt some copies of either Testament, they may be, and have been detected; or whatever mistakes may be made, through the carelessness of transcribers of copies, they are to be corrected by other copies, which God, in his providence, has preserved; and, as it seems, for such purposes: so that we have a perfect canon, or rule of faith and practice. It is objected to the perfection of the books of the Old Testament, that the books of Nathan, Gad, and Iddo, the prophets mentioned therein, are lost; but then it should be proved that these were inspired writings, and, indeed, that they are lost; they may be the same, as some think, with the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. And it is also objected to those of the New Testament, that there was an epistle from Laodicea, Col. iv. 16. and another to the Corinthians, distinct from those we have, 1 Cor. v. 9. neither of them now extant: as to the first, that is not an epistle to Laodicea, but from it; and may refer to one of the epistles, we have, written by the apostle Paul, when at that place: and as to that to the Corinthians, it does not appear to be another and distinct, but the same he was then writing: but admitting, for argument-sake, though it is not to be granted, that some book, or part of the inspired writings is lost; let it be proved, if it can, that any essential article of faith is lost with it; or that there is any such article of faith wanting in the books we have; if this cannot be proved, then, notwithstanding the pretended defect, we have still a perfect rule of faith; which is what is contended for.

VI. This may be further evinced from the charge that is given, "not to add unto, nor diminish from, any part of the sacred writings, law or gospel:" this is strictly enjoined the Israelites to observe, with respect to the law, and the commandments of it, given them by Moses, Deut. iv. 2 and xii. 32. And with respect to the gospel, the apostle Paul, says, *Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you—and ye have received, let him be accursed*, Gal. i. 8, 9. And the wise man, or Agur, says of the Scriptures in his time, Every word of God is pure—add thou not unto his words. And the apostle and evangelist John, closes the canon of the Scripture with these remarkable words, *If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life*, &c. Rev. xxii. 18, 19. Now if there is nothing superfluous in the Scriptures, to be taken from them; and nothing defective in them, which requires any addition to them: then they must be perfect.

VII. This may be argued from the sufficiency of them to answer the ends and purposes for which they are written. As, *for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness*, 2 Tim. iii. 16. they are sufficiently profitable and useful for doctrine; there is no spiritual truth, nor evangelical doctrine, but what they contain; they are called the Scriptures of truth; not only because they come from the God of truth, and whatsoever is in them is truth; but they contain all truth; which the Spirit of God, the dictator of them, guides into, and that by means of them; see Dan. x. 21. John xvi. 13. every doctrine is to be confirmed and established by them; our Lord proved the things concerning himself, his person, office, sufferings, and death, by them, Luke xxiv. 25—27. the apostle Paul reasoned out of the Scriptures, in confirmation and defence of the doctrines he taught; opening and alledging, that is, from the Scriptures, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus is Christ, whom he preached; and, indeed, he said none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say should be, and which he was able to prove from thence, Acts xvii. 2, 3. and xxvi. 22, 23. Every doctrine proposed by men, to the assent of others, is not immediately to be credited; but to be tried and proved, and judged of by the holy Scriptures, which are to be searched, as they were by the Bereans, to see whether those things be so or no; and being found agreeable to them, they are to be believed, and held fast; for *to the law and to the testimony; if men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*, Isa. viii. 20. see 1 John iv. 1. 1 Thess. v. 21. Acts xvii. 11. and these are serviceable for reproof, for the detection, confutation, and conviction of error: thus Christ confuted the error of the Sadducees by the scriptures, Matt xxii. 29, 30. and the apostles, with these, warred a good warfare; these were their spiritual weapons, the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, they used in fighting the good fight of faith, against false teachers; by sound doctrine, fetched from thence, they were able to convince and stop the mouths of gainsayers: there never was an error, or heresy, broached in the world yet, but what has been confuted by the Scriptures; and it is not possible that any one can arise in opposition to "the faith once delivered," but what may receive its refutation from them. They are also of use for correction of every sin, internal or external; of heart, lip, and life, secret or open; sins of omission or commission; all are forbidden, reproved, and condemned by the law of God; which says, Thou shalt not covet, nor do this, and that, and the other iniquity, Rom. vii. 7. and xiii. 9. And the gospel agrees with the law herein; and what is contrary to the law, is to sound doctrine; the gospel of the grace of God, teaches to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," 1 Tim. i. 9—11. Tit. ii. 11, 12. There is not a sin that can be named, but what the Scriptures inveigh against, forbid, and correct. And another end answered by them is, that they are for instruction in righteousness, in every moral duty of religion, and in every positive precept of God, according to the different dispensations; they instruct in every thing of a moral or positive nature, and direct to observe all that is commanded of God and Christ; and now writings by which all such ends are answered, must needs be perfect and compleat.

The Scriptures are sufficient to make *a man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnish* him *unto all good works*, 2 Tim. iii. 17. Not a private good man only, but one in a public character and office; a prophet, a preacher, and minister of the word; in which sense the phrase is used both in the Old and New Testament, 1 Sam. ix. 6. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 11. An acquaintance with these fits him for the work of the ministry, and furnishes him with sound doctrine, to deliver out to the edification of others; by means of these he becomes "a scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God; and to be able to bring out of his treasure things new and old:" and if they are able to make such a man perfect, they must be perfect themselves.

Another use of the Scriptures, and an end to be, and which is, answered by them, is not only the learning and instruction of private men, as well as those of a public character; but to make them patient under afflictions, and comfort them in them, and give hope of deliverance out of them, as well as of eternal salvation hereafter; for the apostle says, *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope*, Rom. xv. 4. Nor is there any afflictive circumstance a good man can come into, but there is a promise in the word of God suitable to him in it; and which may be a means of enlivening, chearing, and comforting him, Psal. cxix. 49, 50. yea, the Scriptures are written to promote and increase the spiritual joy of God's people, and that that joy might be full, and therefore must be full and perfect themselves, 1 John i. 3, 4.

VIII. The Scriptures are able to make a man *wise unto salvation*, 2. Tim. iii. 15. One part of them being the gospel of salvation; which points out to men the way of salvation; gives an account of Christ, the author of it, and of the salvation itself wrought out by him; and describes the persons that have an interest in it, and shall enjoy it; and who, through the grace of God, are made wise enough to see their need of it, seek after it, and embrace it; for it is not barely by reading the word they become so wise; but through the Spirit of wisdom and revelation opening their eyes to see what is contained in it, and applying it to them; whereby the gospel becomes "the power of God unto salvation" to them. In short, the Scriptures contain all things in them necessary to be believed, unto salvation; and, indeed, they are written for this end, that men *might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, they might have life through his name*, John xx. 31. and hereby, under a divine influence and blessing, they come to have the knowledge of God and Christ, and of God in Christ; which is the beginning, earnest, and pledge of eternal life, John xvii. 3. I proceed,

III. To prove the perspicuity of the Scriptures; for since they are a rule of faith and practice, they should be clear and plain, as they are: not that they are all equally clear and plain; some parts of them, and some things in them, are dark and obscure; but then by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, or those more dark passages with those that are clearer, they may be plainly understood. Moreover, the light of the Scriptures has been a growing one; it was but dim under the dispensation of the law of Moses; it became more clear through the writings of the prophets; but most clear under the gospel-dispensation; where, "as in a glass, we behold, with open face, the glory of the Lord;" and of divine things: though in the gospel-dispensation, and in such clear writings and epistles as those of the apostle Paul, who used great plainness of speech, there are some things *hard to be understood*, see 2 Cor. iii. 12—18. 2 Pet. iii. 16. And this is so ordered on purpose to remove all contempt and loathing of the Scriptures, and to humble the arrogance and pride of men, to engage reverence of them, and to excite attention to them, and to put men on searching them with close study, application, and prayer. Nor is every doctrine of the Scriptures expressed in so many words; as the doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; the eternal generation of the Son of God, his incarnation and satisfaction, &c. but then the things themselves signified by them, are clear and plain; and there are terms and phrases answerable to them; or they are to be deduced from thence by just and necessary consequences. Nor are the Scriptures clear and plain to every one that reads them; they are a sealed book, which neither learned nor unlearned men can understand and interpret without the Spirit of God, the dictator of them; the natural man, by the mere light of nature, and dint of reason, though he may understand the grammatical sense of words; yet he does not understand the meaning of them, at least in a spiritual way, with application to himself; and so far as he has any notion of them, he has a disgust and contempt of them, for the most part; yet they are so fully expressed and clearly revealed, that if the gospel is hid to any, it is to ose that perish, who are left to the native darkness of their minds, and to be blinded by the god of this world," that the glorious light of the gospel might ot shine into them, see Isa. xxix. 11, 12. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. But hen the Scriptures are plain to them that have a spiritual understanding; who re spiritual men, and judge all things; "to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom:" What are more clear and plain than the precepts of he law, commanding one thing to be done, and forbidding the doing of another? in what plain language are they expressed, Thou shalt have no other Gods efore me, &c. Thou shalt not kill, &c? And how clearly is asserted the great nd fundamental doctrine of the gospel, "That salvation is alone by Jesus Christ, hrough the free grace of God; and not of the works of men?" and so every hing necessary of belief unto salvation. In short, they are like a full and deep iver, in which the lamb may walk, and the elephant swim, in different places.

The perspicuity of the Scriptures may be urged. — 1. From the author of hem, God, as has been proved, who is the Father of lights; and therefore what omes from him must be light and clear, in whom is no darkness at all. — 2. From the several parts of them, and what they are compared unto. The law, r legal part of them, is represented by things which are light, and give it; *The mmandment is a lamp, and the law is light*, Prov. vi. 23. The commandments f the law, as before observed, are clearly expressed; and are a plain direction to men what to do, or shun; the same David says of the word of the Lord in general nd more explicitly, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, Psal. cxix. 105. directing how to walk and act. The evangelical part of the Scriptures, or the gospel, is compared to a glass, in which may clearly beheld, the glory of the Lord; of his person, offices, grace, and righteousness; and every one of the glorious truths and doctrines of it, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Hence the ministers of the word are called the light of the world; because by opening and explaining the Scriptures, they are instruments of enlightening men in the will of God, and the mysteries of his grace, Matt. v. 14. — 3. From other testimonies of Scripture, particularly from Deut. xxx. 11—14. *For this commandment, which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee; neither is it far off—it is not in heaven—ther is it beyond the sea—but the word is very nigh unto thee; in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.* And if it is not hidden, nor at a distance and inaccessible, then it must be open, and the knowledge of it to be come at; and this is to be understood, not only of the law of Moses, but more especially of the gospel, the word of faith, preached by the apostles, as the apostle Paul interprets it, Rom. x. 6—8. And the whole of Scripture is the sure word of prophecy, whereunto men do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place: and so the means of dispelling the darkness of ignorance, error, and unbelief; and of giving light all around, both with respect to doctrine and duty, see 2 Pet. i. 19. — 4. From exhortations to all sorts of people to read them and who are commended for so doing. Not only the Kings of Israel were to read the law of the Lord, but all that people in general; and there was a certain time of the year for them to assemble together to hear it read, men, women, children, and strangers; but if it was not plain and clear, and easy to be understood, it would have been to no purpose for them to attend it, Deut. xvii. 19. and xxxi. 11—13. Our Lord advises to "search the Scriptures;" which supposes them legible and intelligible, John v. 39. and the Beræans are commended as more noble than those of Thessalonica; because they searched the scriptures daily, and compared what they heard with them; that they might know whether they were right or no, Acts xvii. 11. see Rev. i. 3.—5. From all sorts of persons being capable of reading them, and hearing them read, so as to understand them. Thus in the times of Nehemiah and Ezra, persons of every sex and age, who were at years of maturity, and had the exercise of their rational faculties, had the law read unto them, Neh. viii. 3. and Timothy, from a child, knew the holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. believers, and regenerate persons of every rank and degree, have knowledge of them, whether fathers, young men, or little children, 1 John ii. 12—14. Nor is the public preaching of the word, and the necessity of it, to be objected to all this; since that is, as for conversion, so for greater edification and comfort, and for establishment in the truth, even though it is known; and besides, serves to lead into a larger knowledge of it, and is the ordinary means of guiding into it, and of arriving to a more perfect acquaintance with it, 1 Cor. xiv. 3. 2 Pet. 1. 12. Acts viii. 30, 31. Eph. iv. 11—13. So that it may be concluded, upon the whole, that the Scriptures are

A sure, certain, and infallible rule to go by, with respect to things both to be believed and done: a rule they are, Gal. vi. 16. And since they are of divine authority, and are perfect and plain, they are a sure rule, and to be depended on; *The testimony of the Lord is sure*, Psal. xix. 7. and a more sure word of prophecy than all others whatever, 2 Pet. i. 19, these are the witness of God and therefore greater than man's; and to be believed before any human testimony, 1 John v. 9. yea, must be reckoned infallible, since they are the scriptures of truth, and not only contain what is truth, and nothing but truth in them; but have a true, even a divine testimony bore unto them, and come from the God of truth, who cannot lie, Dan. x. 21. Tit. i. 2. They are the judge of all religious controversies, to which all are to be brought, and by them determined; according to these spiritual men, who have their senses exercised, to discern between good and evil, try and judge all things. The Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture, or the Spirit of God therein; nor are the church or its pastors, nor councils and popes, the infallible interpreters thereof; there is a private interpretation of Scripture, which every christian may make, according to his ability and light; and there is a public one, by the preacher of the word; but both are subject to, and to be determined by the Scripture itself, which is the only certain and infallible rule of faith and practice. And,

IV. There seems to be a real necessity of such a rule in the present state of things; and, indeed, a divine revelation was necessary to Adam, in a state of innocence; how, otherwise, should he have known any thing of the manner of his creation; of the state and condition in which he was created, after the image and in the likeness of God; the extent of his power and authority over the creation; by what means his animal life was to be supported; in what manner God was to be served and worshipped by him, especially the parts of positive and instituted worship, both as to matter, time and place; and particularly the will of God, as to abstinence from eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? And if our first parents stood in need of a divine revelation, as a rule and guide to them in their state of integrity; then much more we in our present state of ignorance and depravity. And after the fall, it was owing to divine revelation, that man had any knowledge of the way of his salvation, by the woman's seed; and of the appointment, nature, import, use, and end of sacrifices; and though this revelation was for a time unwritten, and was handed down by tradition to the patriarchs before the flood, and for some time after, whilst the lives of men were of a long continuance, and it required but few hands to transmit it from one to another; but when men's lives were shortened, and it was the pleasure of God to make further and clearer discoveries of his mind and will, and to frame new laws and rules of worship, in different dispensations; it seemed proper and necessary to commit them to writing, both that they might remain, and that they might be referred to in case of any doubt or difficulty about them; and particularly that the ends before mentioned might be answered by them, which it was intended should be; namely, the learning and instruction of men in matters of faith and practice, their peace, comfort and edification, Rom. xv. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. and the rather since nothing else was, and nothing less than the Scriptures are, a sufficient rule and guide in matters of religion; even not the light of nature and reason, so much talked of, and so highly exalted; and since it has been set up as such against divine revelation, it may be proper to shew the insufficiency of it. Now the light of nature or reason, is not to be taken in an abstract sense, or considered only in theory, what it has been, may be, or should be, but not subsisting in men or books; as such it can be no rule or guide at all to have recourse unto; and besides, reason in such sense, is not opposed to revelation; there is nothing in revelation contrary to reason, though there are things above it, and of which it is not a competent judge, and therefore can be no guide in such matters; but it must be considered as it is in fact, and as it subsists, either in single individuals, or in whole bodies of men, and these unacquainted with, and unassisted by divine revelation; and then its sufficiency, or rather insufficiency, will soon appear. If it is considered as in individuals, it may easily be observed it is not alike in all, but differs according to the circumstances of men, climate, constitution, education, &c. some have a greater share of it than others; and what is agreeable to the reason of one man, is not so to another; and therefore unless it was alike and equal in all, it can be no sure rule or guide to go by: let one of the most exalted genius be pitched upon, one of the wisest and sagest philosophers of the Gentiles, that has studied nature most, and arrived to the highest pitch of reason and good sense; for instance, let Socrates be the man, who is sometimes magnified as divine, and in whom the light of nature and reason may be thought to be sublimated and raised to its highest pitch, in the Gentile world, without the help of revelation; and yet, as it was in him, it must be a very deficient rule of faith and practice; for though he asserted the unity of the divine Being, and is said to die a martyr for it; yet he was not clear of the heathenish notions of inferior deities, and of worship to be given them; for one of the last things spoken by him was, to desire his friends to fulfil a vow of his, to offer a cock to Æsculapius, the god of health; and he is most greviously belied, if he was not guilty of the love of boys in an unnatural way; and besides, he himself bewails the weakness and darkness of human reason, and confessed the want of a guide. If the light of nature and reason be considered in large bodies of men, in whole nations, it will appear not to be the same in all. Some under the guidance of it have worshipped one sort of deities, and some others; have gone into different modes of worship, and devised different rites and ceremonies, and followed different customs and usages, and even differed in things of a moral nature; and as their forefathers, guided by this light, introduced, and established the said things; they, with all their observations, reflections, and reasonings on them, or increase of light, supposing they had any, were never able, by the light of nature and reason in them, to prevail over, and demolish such idolatry, and such profane and wicked practices that obtained among them; and the insufficiency thereof, as a rule and guide in religion, will further appear by considering the the following particulars.

1. That there is a God may be known by the light of nature; but who and what he is, men, destitute of a divine revelation, have been at a loss about. Multitudes have gone into polytheism, and have embraced for gods almost every thing in and under the heavens; not only the sun, moon, and stars, and mortal men they have deified; but various sorts of beasts, fishes, fowl, creeping things, and even forms of such that never existed: and some that have received the notion of a supreme Being, yet have also acknowledged a numerous train of inferior deities, and have worshipped the creature besides the Creator; whose folly is represented in a true and full light by the apostle, Rom. i. 19—25. and though the unity of the divine Being, is the voice of reason as well as of revelation; yet by the former, without the latter, we could have had no certain notion, if any at all, of three divine Persons subsisting in the unity of the divine essence; and especially of the several parts they have taken in the œconomy of man's salvation; for as for what Plato, and others have been supposed to say concerning a Trinity, it is very lame and imperfect, and what was borrowed from eastern tradition.

II. Though the light of nature may teach men that God, their Creator and Benefactor, is to be worshipped by them; and may direct them to some parts of worship, as to pray unto him for what they want, and praise him for what they have received; yet a perfect plan of worship, acceptable to God, could never have been formed according to that; and especially that part of it could not have been known which depends upon the arbitrary will of God, and consists of positive precepts and institutions; hence the Gentiles, left to that, and without a divine revelation, have introduced modes of worship the most absurd and ridiculous, as well as cruel and bloody, even human sacrifices, and the slaughter of their own children, as well as the most shocking scenes of debauchery and uncleanness.

III. By the light of nature men may know that they are not in the same condition and circumstances they originally were; for when they consider things, they cannot imagine that they were made by a holy Being subject to such irregular passions and unruly lusts which now prevail in them; but in what state they were made, and how they fell from that estate, and came into the present depraved one, they know not; and still less how to get out of it, and to be cured of their irregularities: but divine revelation informs us how man was made upright, and like unto God; and by what means he fell from his uprightness into the sinful state he is in; and how he may be recovered from it, and brought out of it by the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit of God, and not otherwise.

IV. Though, as the apostle says, the Gentiles without the law, *do by nature the things contained in the law*; and are *a law to themselves, which shew the work of the law written on their hearts; their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another,* Rom. ii. 14, 15. and so have some notion of the difference between moral good and evil; yet this is not so clear and extensive, but that some of the greatest moralists among them, gave into the most notorious vices, and allowed of them, and recommended them; Chrysippus[r] allowed of incest; Plato[s] commended community of wives; Socrates a plurality of wives, and which he enforced by his own example[t]; Cicero[u] pleaded for fornication; the Stoics, a grave set of moralists, for the use of obscene words[w], and recommended self-murder as becoming a wise man[x], and as his duty to commit in some cases. So dim was this light of nature in things of a moral kind.

V. Though in many cases reason taught them that certain vices were disagreeable to God, and resented by him, and he was displeased with them, and would punish for them; and they were very desirous of appeasing him; but then how to reconcile him to them, and recommend themselves to his favour, they were quite ignorant; and therefore took the most shocking and detestable methods for it, as human sacrifices, and particularly, burning their innocent infants. But revelation shews us the more excellent way.

[r] Laertius in Vita ejus. [s] Vid. Grotium in Eph. 5 6. [t] Laertius in Vita ejus. [u] Orat. 14. pro Coelio. [w] Vid. Ciceron. Ep. l. 9. ep. 22. [x] Vid. Lips. Manuduct, Stoic. Philosoph. Dissert. 22. p. 865.

VI. Men may, by the light of nature, have some notion of sin as an offence to God, and of their need of forgiveness from him; and from a general notion of his mercy, and of some instances of kindness to them, may entertain some faint hope of the pardon of it; but then they cannot be certain of it from thence, or that even God will pardon sin at all, the sins of any man; and still less how this can be done consistent with his holiness and justice; but through divine revelation we come at a clear and certain knowledge of this doctrine, and of its consistence with the divine perfections.

VII. The light of nature leaves men entirely without the knowledge of the way of salvation by the Son of God. And even without revelation, angels of themselves would not be able to know the way of saving sinful men, or how sinful men can be justified before God; wherefore, in order to know this, they "desire to look into it," 1 Pet. i. 12. Some have thought that Socrates had some notion of it; who is made to say[y], "It is necessary to wait till some one teaches how to behave towards God and men:" but then this respects only a man's outward conduct, and not his salvation: nor does the philosopher seem to have any clear notion of the instructer, and of the means he should use to instruct, and still less of the certainty of his coming; and besides, the relater of this, Plato might receive this as a tradition, in the East, whither it is well known he travelled for knowledge. But the divine revelation gives an account of this glorious Person, not merely as an Instructer of men in the way of their duty, but as a Saviour of them from their sins; and in what way he has wrought out our salvation, by his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness.

VIII. The light of nature is far from giving any clear and certain account of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and a future state of happiness and misery: as for the immortality of the soul, the heathens rather wished it to be true, than were fully satisfied of it; they that were for it, made use of but mean arguments to prove it; and they themselves believed it only *fide dimidiata*, as Minutius Felix[z] expresses it, with a divided faith; they did, as it were, but half believe it; and as for the resurrection of the body, that was denied, as Tertullian says[a], by every sect of the philosophers: and in what a low manner do they represent the happiness of the future state; by walking in pleasant fields, by sitting under fragrant bowers, and cooling shades, and by shelter from inclement weather; by viewing flowing fountains and purling streams; by carnal mirth, feasting, music, and dancing: and the misery of it, by being bound neck and heels together, or in chains, or fastened to rocks, and whipped by furies, with a scourge of serpents, or doomed to some laborious service. But not the least hint is given of the presence of God with the one, nor of his absence from the other; nor of any sensation of his love or wrath. Let us therefore bless God that we have a better rule and guide to go by; "a more sure word of prophecy to take heed unto:" let us have constant re-

[y] Plato in Alcibiad. 2. p. 459.
[z] Octav. p. 37.
[a] De Præscript. Hæret. c. 7. p. 232.

ourse unto it, as the standard of faith and practice; and try every doctrine nd practice by it, and believe and act as that directs us, and fetch every thing rom it that may be for our good, and the glory of God.

* * *

OF THE NAMES OF GOD.

BEING about to treat of God, and of the things of God, it may be proper to egin with his names; the names of persons and things are usually the first that re known of them; and if these are not known, it cannot be thought that much, f any thing, is known of them; and where the name of God is not known, e himself cannot be known; and the rather the consideration of his name, or ames, is worthy of regard, because they serve to lead into some knowledge of is nature and perfections; and therefore a proper introduction to such a subect. Indeed, properly speaking, since God is incomprehensible, he is not noninable; and being but one, he has no need of a name to distinguish him; and herefore Plato[b] says, he has no name; and hence he commonly calls him, το ον, ens. The Being. So when Moses asked the Lord, what he should say to he children of Israel, should they ask the name of him that sent him to them, e bid him say, *I am that I am*; that is, The eternal Being, the Being of beings; which his name Jehovah is expressive of: nevertheless, there are names of God n the scriptures taken from one or other of his attributes, which are worthy of onsideration.

The names of God, as Zanchy[c] observes, some of them respect him as the subject, as Jehovah, Lord, God: others are predicates, what are spoken of him, or attributed to him, as holy, just, good, &c. Some respect the relation the divine persons in the Godhead stand to each other, as Father, Son, and Spirit: others the relation of God to the creatures; and which are properly said of him, and not them, as Creator, Preserver, Governor, &c. some are common to the three divine Persons, as Jehovah, God, Father, Spirit; and some peculiar to each, as the epithets of unbegotten, begotten, proceeding from the Father and the Son: some are figurative and metaphorical, taken from creatures, to whom God is compared; and others are proper names, by which he either calls himself, or is called by the prophets and Apostles, in the books of the Old and New Testament; which are what will be particularly considered.

1. Elohim is the first name of God we meet with in Scripture, and is translated God, Gen. i. 1. and is most frequently used throughout the whole Old Testament; sometimes, indeed, improperly of creatures, angels, and men, and of false deities, Psal. viii. 5. and lxxxii. 1, 6. Jer. x. 11. but properly only of God.

Some derive this word from a root, which signifies to curse and sware; but as to the reasons why this name is given to the divine being on that account, it is not agreed; some[d], of late, have given this as a reason, because the three divine Persons, as they in a shocking manner express it, bound themselves with an oath, under a curse, to redeem mankind; which, to say no worse of, is indecent and unworthy of the dignity and majesty of God, "who is blessed for evermore;" for to bind himself with an oath, and that under a conditional curse; which is no other than to imprecate a curse upon himself, if his oath and covenant are not fulfilled; is so harsh, if not something worse, as is not to be endured: and though Christ agreed to redeem men, and to be made a curse for them, that they might receive the blessing; yet he was not accursed through any failure of his oath and covenant; but on another account, being the Surety of his people; nor is he ever called Eloah on that account, and still less the other two persons: besides there are other and better reasons to be given for this name of the divine Being, supposing it to be taken from the word signifying as above; as, because he adjures and causes others to swear, and binds them with an oath to himself; in which sense the word is used of men, 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 1 Kings viii. 31. and is the business of Judges; by which oath men are bound to God[e], and not he to them; and so, according to the Jewish writers[f], the word is expressive of God as a Judge; in which they are followed by some learned men[g]: or because he pronounces a man accursed who breaks his law, and neglects and despises the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ; so Cocceius[h]: or, because he is the object men must swear by, whenever they swear at all; see Deut. vi. 13. Isa. lxv. 16. Though this word Elohim cannot be derived from the word so signifying, because it has the immoveable and immutable ה as appears from the point mappick, in its singular Eloah, and from the construction of it, which that word has not; and besides, that is never used of God when he is said to swear, but always another.

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[b] αλλ' αρα ονομα εστιν αυτω, in Parmenide, p. 1120. Ed. Ficin. So Trismegistus apud Lactant. Institut. l. 1. c. 6.

[c] De Natura Dei, l. 1. c. 4.

The word Elohim may be better derived from a word in the Arabic language, which signifies to worship, as is thought by many learned men[i]; and so is a fit name for God, who is the sole object of religious worship and adoration; not idols of gold, silver, &c. nor living men, nor persons deified after death, nor angels; but the Lord God only, Matt. iv. 10. It is a word of the plural number, and though it has a singular, which is sometimes used, yet it is most frequently in this form; and being joined with a verb singular, as in Gen. i. 1. it is thought[k] to denote a plurality of persons in the unity of the divine essence; and certain it is, that three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, appeared, and were concerned in the creation of all things, Gen. i. 1—3. Psal. xxxiii. 6.

11. Another name of God is El; and which may be observed in the word

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[d] Called Hutchinsonians; see Catcott's Sermon, called, The supreme and inferior Elahim, p. 8.
[e] Marckii Compend. Theolog. c. 4. s. 5. Mastrict. Theolog. l. 2. c. 4. s. 9. Leigh's Critica Sacra in voce אלה.
[f] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 87. 1. Sepher Cosri, par. 4. fol. 197. 2. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim. par. 2. c. 6.
[g] Lud. Capellus & alii.
[h] Lexic. col. 95.
[i] Stockii Clavis S. Ling. p. 61. Hottingeri Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 8. p. 129. Schultens in Job i. 1. Noldius, No. 1093. Alting Dissert. 4. de plural. Elohim, p. 177.
[k] Schindler. Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 78.

Beth-el, which signifies, *The house of God*, Gen. xii. 7, 8. Both the singular and plural, El Elim, the God of gods, are used in Dan. xi. 36. and the word is left untranslated in Matt. xxvii. 46. *Eli, Eli; my God, my God.* It is commonly rendered, by Junius and Tremellius, the strong or mighty God; an epithet that well agrees with the divine Being, Job ix. 4, 19. Psal. lxxxix. 8, 13. and is one of the names of the Messiah, Isai. ix. 6. Hillerus[l] takes this to be a part of the word Eloah, the singular of Elohim; which, according to him, signifies the first in essence; being the first and the last, the beginning and the end, Isai. xliv. 6. Rev. i. 8. it is expressive of the power of God.

III. The next name of God we meet with is Elion, the most high, Gen. xiv. 18—22. So Christ is called *The son of the Highest*, and the Spirit, *the power of the Highest*, Luke i. 32, 35. and which name God has either from his habitation, the highest heavens; which is his palace, where he keeps his court, and which is his throne; in which high and holy place he, the high and lofty One, dwells, Isai. lvii. 15. and lxvi. 1. or from his superiority, power, and dominion over all creatures, over the highest personages on earth, and the highest angels in heaven, Psal. lxxxiii. 18. and xcvii. 9. see also Eccles. v. 8. or from the sublimity of his nature and essence, which is out of the reach of finite minds, and is incomprehensible, Job xi. 7, 8. this name was known among the Phoenicians, and is given to one of their deities, called Elioun, the most high[m]; it is expressive of the supremacy of God.

IV. Another name of God is, Shaddai: under this name God appeared to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1. and to which reference is had, Exod. vi. 3. we translate it Almighty in both places, and in all others, particularly in the book of Job, where it is often mentioned; and it well agrees with him whose power is infinite and uncontroulable, and appears in the works of his hands, creation and providence. Some choose to render it sufficient, or all-sufficient[n] God; having a sufficiency in and of himself, and for himself, to make himself compleatly and infinitely happy; nor does he need, nor can he receive any thing from his creatures to add to his happiness; and he has a sufficiency for them; he can, and does, supply all the wants of his people, temporal and spiritual; "his grace is sufficient for them." Others render it Nourisher[o]; deriving it from a word which signifies a breast; that being what creatures nourish their young with; and is made mention of when this name of God is spoken of, Gen. xlix. 25. God not only fills men's hearts with food and gladness, but, "he opens his hand and satisfies the desire of all creatures, and gives them their meat in due season," Acts xiv. 17. Psal. cxlv. 15, 16. Hillerus[p], derives it from a word which signifies to pour out, or shed; and it well agrees with God, who pours forth, or sheds his blessings, in great plenty, on his creatures; and which flow from him as from a fountain; to which he is often compared: though others give a very different etymology of it; deriving it from a word[q] which signifies to destroy; to which there seems to be a beautiful allusion in Isai. xiii. 6. "Destruction from Shaddai, the destroyer," who destroyed the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, the first-born of the Egyptians, and Pharaoh and his host: though God is so called, previous to most of these instances; indeed he is "the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy;" even to destroy body and soul in hell, with an everlasting destruction. And some render the word, the Darter, or Thunderer[r]; whose darts are his thunderbolts, Job vi. 4. Psal. xviii. 13, 14. The heathens called their chief god, *Jupiter tonans*, the thunderer: and, perhaps, from another etymology of this word before given, from שד a breast. Some of their deities are represented as full of breasts; so Ceres, Isis, and Diana. This name seems to be expressive of the all-sufficiency of God, and of the supply of his creatures from it.

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[l] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 254, 256. [m] Sanchoniatho apud Euseb. Evangel. præpar. l. 1. c. 10. p. 36. [n] So Cocceius in Lex. col. 859. Jarchi in Gen. xvii. 1. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 63. [o] Paschii Dissert. de Selah, p. 2. s. 6. [p] Onomast. Sacr. p. 260, 261.

v. Another of the names of God is, the Lord, or God of hosts; it is first mentioned in 1 Sam. i. 3, 11. but frequently afterwards; and is left untranslated in James v. 4. where the Lord is called, *the Lord of Sabaoth*, not *Sabbath*, as it is sometimes wrongly understood; and as if it was the same with *Lord of Sabbath*, Matt. xii. 8. for though the words are somewhat alike in sound, they are very different in sense; for Sabbath signifies rest, and Sabaoth hosts or armies: the Lord is the God of armies on earth, a man of war, expert in it; that teacheth men's hands to war, and their fingers to fight, and is the Generalissimo of them, as he was particularly of the armies of Israel, as they are called, Exod. vii. 4. which he brought out of Egypt, and went at the head of them, and fought their battles for them; see Exod. xiv. 14. and xv. 3. and who gives success and victory on what side soever he takes: and he is the Lord of the hosts of the starry heavens; the sun, moon, and stars, called the host of heaven, Gen. ii. 1. 2 Kings xxi. 3. and xxiii. 5. and by this military term, because under the Lord they sometimes fight, as the stars did against Sisera, Judg. v. 20. and also of the airy heavens; and the locusts that fly there are his army, Joel ii. 7, 11. and the meteors, thunder and lightening, snow and hail, which are laid up by him against the day of battle and war, are the artillery he sometimes brings forth against the enemies of his people; as he did against the Egyptians and Canaanites Job xxxviii. 22, 23. Exod. ix. 23—25. Josh. x. 11. the angels also are the militia of heaven, and are called the heavenly host, Luke ii. 13. see 1 Kings xxii. 19. the place where the angels of God met Jacob, was called from thence Mahanaim, Gen. xxxii. 11, 12. two hosts or armies, one going before him, and the other behind him; or the one on one side him and the other on the other, to guard him; hence they are said to encamp about them that fear the Lord, Psal. xxxiv. 7. These are the creatures of God by whom he is adored and served; they are at his command, and sometimes employed in a military way, to destroy his and his people's enemies; see 2 Kings xix. 35. This name is expressive of God's dominion over all his creatures, and the several armies of them.

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[q] שדד vastavit Buxtorf. [r] So Schmidt in Job vi. 4.

VI. Another name of God is Adonai, or Adon, Gen. xv. 2. and is commonly rendered Lord. Hence the Spanish word *don* for lord. God is so called, because he is the Lord of the whole earth, Zech. iv. 14. Some[s] derive it from a word which signifies the basis, prop, or support of any thing[t]. So a King in the Greek language is called *βασιλευς*, because he is the basis and support of his people: and so God is the support of all his creatures; "he upholds all things by the word of his power;" he bears up the pillars of the earth; all men move and have their being in him; and "he upholds his saints with the right hand of his righteousness;" and even his Son, as man and mediator, Isai. xli. 10. and xlii. 1. Some think it has the signification of a judge[u]; "God is the judge of all the earth;" and is a righteous one, protects and defends good men, and takes vengeance on the wicked; and will judge the world in righteousness at the last day. Though, perhaps, Hillerus[w] is rightest in rendering it the cause, from which, and for which, all things are; as all things are made by the Lord, and for his will, pleasure, and glory, see Rom. xi. 36. Heb. ii. 10. Rev. iv. 11. Adon is used in the plural number of God, Mal. i. 6. and so Adonai is used of the Son, as well as of the Father, Psal. cxi. 1. and of the holy Spirit, Isai. vi. 8. compared with Acts xxviii. 25. Hence Adonis, with the heathens, the same with the sun, their chief deity, according to Macrobius[x], by whom Bacchus is called[y] Ebon, or rather Edon; who, he says, is also the same with the sun.

VII. The famous name of God is Jehovah; this is a name he takes to himself, and claims it, Exod. vi. 3. Isai. xlii. 8. and is peculiar to him; his name alone is Jehovah, and incommunicable to another, Psal. lxxxiii. 18. because this name is predicated of God, as a necessary and self-existent being, as a learned Jew[z] observes, which no other is; for though it is sometimes spoken of another, yet not singly and properly, but with relation to him. So the church is called Jehovah-shammah, because of his presence with her, Ezek. xlviii. 35. The Jews, from a superstitious abuse of it, assert it to be ineffable, and not to be pronounced, and even not to be read and written, and therefore they substitute other names instead of it, as Adonai, and Elohim. This might arise, originally, from their very great awe and reverence of this name, according to Deut. xxviii. 58. but every name of God is reverend, and not to be taken in vain, nor used in common, nor with any degree of levity, Psal. cxi. 9. it is written with four letters only; hence the Jews called it *tetragrammaton*, and is very probably the *τετρακτυς* of the Pythagoreans, by which they swore; and it is remarkable, that the word for God is so written in almost all languages; denoting, it may be, that he is the God of the whole world; and ought to be served and worshipped, and his name to be great and had in reverence in the four quarters of it; it takes in all tenses, past, present, and to come[a]: the words of the evangelist John are a proper periphrasis of it; *which is, and which was, and which is to come*, Rev. i. 4. or, *shall be*, as in chap. xvi. 5. it comes from the root היה or הוה which signify, to be, and is expressive of the essence of God; of his necessary and self-existence, for God naturally and necessarily exists; which cannot be said of any other: creatures owe their being to the arbitrary will of God; and so might be, and might not be as he pleased; but God exists in and of himself, he is a self-existent and independent Being, as he must needs be, since he is before all creatures, and therefore cannot have his being from them; and he is the cause of theirs, and therefore must be independent of them; and yet, when we say he is self-existent, it must not be understood as if he made himself; for though he exists, he is not made. He is the Being of beings; all creatures have their beings from him and in him, "the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that is in them;" he is the former and maker of all things; he is eminently the Being, and all in comparison of him are mere non-entities; *all nations* and the inhabitants of them, *are as nothing before him*; *yea, less than nothing, and vanity*, Isai. xl. 17.

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[s] Paschius in Dissert. de Selah, ut supra. Alsted. Lexic. Theolog. p. 82.

[t] אדני foundations, bases, Job xxxviii. 6. often rendered sockets in Exodus.

[u] A דין judicavit.

[w] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 258.

[x] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 21.

[y] Ibid. c. 18.

[z] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2, c. 28.

VIII. Jah is another name of God, which is mentioned in Psal. lxviii. 4. and cl. 6. Isai. xxvi. 4. though it may be only an abreviation or contraction of the word Jehovah, and may signify the same; according to Cocceius[b], it comes from יאת Jer. x. 7. and signifies decency, or what is meet and becoming.

IX. Ejeh is a name of God gave as a name of his to Moses, when he sent him to the children of Israel; and is translated *I AM that I AM*, Exod. iii. 13, 14. and may be rendered, *I shall be what I shall be*, and what I have been; so the Jews[c] interpret it; "I am he that was, I am he that is now, and I am he that is to come, or shall be." It seems to be of the same signification with Jehovah, and to be derived from the same word, and is expressive of the same things; of the being and existence of God, of his eternity and immutability, and of his faithfulness in performing his promises: our Lord has a manifest respect unto it, when he says, *Before Abraham was I am*, John viii. 58. Hillerus[d] renders it *I remain*, that is, always the same.

X. The names of God in the New Testament are these two κυριος and θεος, the one is usually rendered Lord and the other God. The first is derived from κυρω, to be[e], and signifies the same as Jehovah, to which it commonly answers, and denotes the essence or being of God; or from κυρος[f], power and authority; and agrees with God, who has a sovereign power and authority over all creatures, having a property in them, by virtue of his creation of them; it is generally used of Christ, "who is Lord of all," Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph. iv. 4. The etymology of θεος, God, is very different; as either from a word which signifies to run, or from one that signifies to heat, or from one that signifies to

[a] Buxtorf. de Nomin. Dei, Heb. s. 10.

[b] Lexic. p. 283.

[c] Shemot Rabba, s. 3. fol. 93. 3.

[d] Onomast. Sacr. p. 248.

[e] κυρει, eſt, exiſtit, Suidas; κυρω, sum, Scapula.

[f] κυρος, autoritas; κυριος autoritatem habens, Scapula; so Philo, quis rer. divin. Hæres, p. 484.

see; which seem to be calculated by the heathens for the sun, the object of their worship, applicable to it, for its constant course, being the fountain of light and heat, and seeing all things, as they affirm: though each of them may be applied to the true God, who runs to the assistance of his people in distress, 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Psal. xlvi. 1. is light itself, "the Father of lights, and a consuming fire," 1 John i. 5. Jam. i. 17. Heb. xii. 29. and sees all men, their ways and works, and even their hearts, the thoughts of them, Job xxxiv. 21, 22. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Some derive it from a word which signifies to dispose; and which agrees with God, who disposes of, and orders all things "in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth, according to the council of his will," and to answer the purposes of his own glory, and the good of his creatures. Though perhaps, it may be best of all to derive it from a word which signifies fear[g], and so describes God as the object of fear and reverence; who is not only to be stood in awe of by all the inhabitants of the earth, Psal. xxxiii. 8. but more especially is to be feared with a godly fear by his saints, Psal. lxxxvii. 7. Heb. xii. 28. and fear sometimes takes in the whole worship of God, both internal and external; and so the true God, in distinction from others, is called, the Fear, that is, the God of Isaac, Gen. xxxi. 53. and דחלא fear, is sometimes used in the Targum[h] for the true God, as it sometimes is of idols.

From all these names of God we learn that God is, the eternal, immutable, and almighty Being, the Being of beings, self-existent, and self-sufficient, and the object of religious worship and adoration.

OF THE NATURE OF GOD.

THERE is a nature that belongs to every creature, which is difficult to understand: and so to God, the Creator, which is most difficult of all: that Nature may be predicated of God, is what the apostle suggests when he says, the Galatians, before conversion, served them, who *by nature, were no gods*, Gal. iv. 8. which implies, that though the idols they had worshipped were not, yet there was one, that was by Nature, GOD; otherwise there would be an impropriety in denying it of them. Mention is also made of the divine Nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. which, indeed, is not the nature that is in God, but what is infused and implanted in men in regeneration; so called not only because it is from God, as its author, but because it is the image of him, and bears a likeness and resemblance to him: but then there must be a nature in him to which this is similar, being "created, after him, in righteousness and true holiness;" or there would be no

[g] ἀπὸ τοῦ θεῖν, currere, so Plato in Cratylo p. 279. Clem. Al. protrept. p. 15. vel a αἴθειν adurere, accendere vel θεάσθαι, cernere, vel a θῶ dispono; so Clem. Al. Stromat. in fine, Herodot. Euterpe, c. 52. vel a δέος timor, Philo ut supra; these several etymologies may be seen in Zanchy de Natura Dei, l. 1. c. 16. Alsted. Lexic. Theolog. p. 8. [h] Targum Hierosol. in Deut. xxxii. 15.

propriety in the denomination of it from him. This is what is called Divinity Deity, or Godhead; which must not be thought to be "like to gold, silver, or stone, graven by art, or man's device;" or to be in the similitude of any creature in a picture, painting or sculpture; and which is to be seen and understood by the visible works of creation, and is what, "in all its perfection and fulness, dwells bodily in Christ," Acts xvii. 29. Rom. i. 20. Col. ii. 9, it is the same with the form of God, in which Christ is said to be, Phil. ii. 6. which designs not any external form, for God has no visible shape, but his internal Glory, excellency, nature, and perfections, in which "Christ is equal with him, and his fellow;" and he is not only the express image of him, but one with him: not merely of a like, but of the same nature; so that he that sees the one, sees the other. Essence, which is the same thing with nature, is ascribed to God; he is said to be excellent תושיה in essence, Isai. xxviii. 29. for so the words may be rendered, that is, he has the most excellent essence or being; this is contained in his names, Jehovah, and I am that I am, which are expressive of his essence or being, as has been observed; and we are required to believe that he is, that he has a being or essence, and does exist, Heb. xi. 6. and essence is that by which a person or thing is what it is, that is its nature; and with respect to God, it is the same with his face, which cannot be seen, Exod. xxxiii. 20, 23. that is, cannot be perceived, understood, and fully comprehended, especially in the present state; and, indeed, though in the future state saints will behold the face of God, and "see him face to face, and as he is," so far as they are capable of, yet it is impossible for a finite mind, in its most exalted state, to comprehend the infinite Nature and Being of God.

This nature is common to the three Persons in God, but not communicated from one to another; they each of them partake of it, and possess it as one undivided nature; they all enjoy it; it is not a part of it that is enjoyed by one, and a part of it by another, but the whole by each; as "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ," so in the holy Spirit; and of the Father, there will be no doubt; these equally subsist in the unity of the divine essence, and that without any derivation or communication of it from one to another. I know it is represented by some, who, otherwise, are sound in the doctrine of the Trinity, that the divine nature is communicated from the Father to the Son and Spirit, and that he is *fons Deitatis*, the fountain of Deity;" which, I think, are unsafe phrases; since they seem to imply a priority in the Father to the other two persons; for he that communicates must, at least in order of nature, and according to our conception of things, be prior to whom the communication is made; and that he has a superabundant plenitude of Deity in him, previous to this communication. It is better to say, that they are self-existent, and exist together in the same undivided essence; and jointly, equally, and as early one as the other, possess the same nature.

The nature of God is, indeed, incomprehensible by us; somewhat of it may be apprehended, but it cannot be fully comprehended; *Canst thou by searching* *find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* Job xi. 7. No: but then this does not forbid us searching and enquiring after him: though we cannot have adequate ideas of God, yet we should endeavour to get the best we can, and frame the best conceptions of him we are able; that so we may serve and worship him, honour and glorify him, in the best manner. The world, the heathen world, even the wisest in it, *by wisdom knew not God,* 1 Cor. i. 21. they knew, or might know, there was a God, but they did not know what he was, and so glorified him not as God. An heathen philosopher[i] being asked this question, What God was? required a day to think of it; when that was up, he asked a second, and still more time; and a reason of his dilatoriness being demanded of him, he replied, That the longer he considered of the question, the more obscure it was to him. Yet, somewhat of God, of his nature and perfections, may be known by the light of nature, Rom. i. 19, 20. and more by divine revelation; for though it may with propriety be said, *what is his name,* or nature, *if thou canst, tell?* Prov. xxx. 4. yet him whom the heathens ignorantly worshipped, the apostle Paul declared unto them, Acts xvii. 23. and though the Samaritans worshipped they knew not what, yet Christ declared to the woman of Samaria, what God, the object of spiritual worship, is; saying God is a spirit; that is, he is of a spiritual nature, John iv. 22, 24. and this we may be sure is a true definition, description, and declaration of God, and of his nature; since this was given by the Son of God, who lay in his bosom, and perfectly knew his nature, as well as his will; see John i. 18. Matt. xi. 27. and by which we are taught,

1. That God is not a body, and that we are, in our conceptions of him, to remove every thing from him that is corporeal; for spirit, and body or flesh, are opposed to one another, Isai. xxxi. 3. Luke xxiv. 39. and yet there have been some, both ancients and moderns, atheistically inclined, who have asserted, that matter is God, and God is universal matter: and that the whole universe is God, and that extension is one of his attributes; and a sort of people called Anthropomorphites, who bore the christian name, ascribed an human body, and the parts of it, to God, in a proper sense, mistaking some passages of scripture; and the common people among the papists, have no other notion of God, than of a grave old man: in this respect both Jews and Heathens have better notions; of the Jews R, Joseph Albo[k], Maimonides[l], and others, deny that God is a body, or consists of bodily parts: and of Heathens, Pythagoras[m], Xenophanes[n], Sallustius[o], and others[p], affirm God to be incorporeal; and the Stoics say, he has not an human form[q]. But if God was matter, which is inert, unactive, and motionless, he could not be the maker and mover of all things, as he is; *for in him we live, and move, and have our being,* Acts xvii. 28. Matter

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[i] Simonides apud Cicero. de Natura Deor. l. 1.
[k] Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 6.
[l] Hilchot Yesude Hatorah, c. 1. s. 5. 6.
[m] Apud Lactant. de Ira, c. 11.
[n] Apud Clement. Stromat. 5. p. 601.
[o] De Diis & Mundo, c. 2.
[p] So Aristotle, Laert, l. 5. in Vita ejus.
[q] Laert. l. 7. in Vita Zeno.

is without consciousness, is not capable of thinking, and without understanding, wisdom, and knowledge; and as it is not capable of acting, so much less of doing, such works as require contrivance, skill, wisdom, and knowledge, as the works of creation and providence; and therefore if God was matter, he could not be the Creator and Governor of the world; nor if a body, could he be omnipresent; a body is not every where, cannot be in two places at the same time; whereas God fills heaven and earth: and was he of so huge a body as to take up all space, there would be no room for other bodies, as there certainly is; nor would he be invisible; a body is to be seen and felt; but God is invisible and impalpable; "no man hath seen God at any time;" and if a body, he would not be the most perfect of beings, as he is, since angels, and the souls of men, being spirits, are more excellent than bodies.

It is no objection to this, that the parts of an human body are sometimes attributed to God; since these are to be understood of him not in a proper, but in an improper and figurative sense, and denote some act and action, or attribute of his; thus his face denotes his sight and presence, in which all things are, Gen. xix. 13. sometimes his favour and good will, and the manifestation of his love and grace, Psal. xxvii. 8. and lxxx. 3. and sometimes his wrath and indignation against wicked men, Psal. xxxiv. 16. Rev. vi. 17. His eyes signify his omniscience, and all-seeing providence; concerned both with good men, to protect and preserve them, and bestow good things on them; and with bad men, to destroy them, Prov. xv. 3. 2. Chron. xvi. 9. Amos ix. 8. His ears, his readiness to attend unto, and answer the requests of his people, and deliver them out of their troubles, Psal. xxxiv. 15. Isa. lix. 1. His nose and nostrils, his acceptance of the persons and sacrifices of men, Gen. viii. 21. or his disgust at them, anger with them, and non-acceptance of them, Duet. xxix. 20. Isai. lxv. 5. Psal. xviii. 8. His mouth is expressive of his commands, promises, threatenings, and prophecies delivered out by him, Lam. iii. 29. Isai. i. 20. Jer. xxiii. 16. His arms and hands signify his power, and the exertion of it, as in making the heavens and the earth, and in other actions of his, Psal. cii. 27. Job xxvi. 13. Psal. lxxxix. 13. and cxviii. 16. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

Nor is it any proof of corporeity in God, that a divine person has sometimes appeared in an human form; so one of the men that came to Abraham, in the plains of Mamre, was no other, than the Lord omniscient and omnipotent, as the after discourse with him shews, Gen. xviii. 3. And the man that wrestled with Jacob till break of day, was a divine person, of which Jacob was sensible; and therefore called the place where he wrestled with him, Peniel, the face of God, Gen. xxxii. 24, 30. So he that appeared to Manoah, and his wife, Judg. xiii. 6, 10, 18. with other instances that might be mentioned. But then these were appearances of the Son of God in an human form, and were presages of his future incarnation; for as for the Father, no man ever saw his shape, John v. 37. and, it may be, the reason why the parts of an human body are so often ascribed to God, may be on account of Christ's incarnation, to prepare the minds of men for it, to inure them to ideas of it, to raise their expectation of it, and strengthen their faith in it; and the rather since these attributions were more frequent before the coming of Christ in the flesh, and very rarely used afterwards.

Nor will the formation of man in the image, and after the likeness of God, afford a sufficient argument to prove that there is something corporeal in God, seeing man has a soul or spirit, in which this image and likeness chiefly and principally lay; and which was originally created in righteousness and holiness, in wisdom and knowledge: and though he has a body also; yet, inasmuch as a body was prepared in the council and covenant of grace, from eternity, for the Son of God to assume in time; and in the book of God's eternal purposes, *all the members* of it *were written*; *which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them*, Heb. x. 5. Psal. cxxxix. 16. God might, according to the idea of it in his eternal mind, form the body of the first man.

II. The description of God, as a Spirit, teaches us to ascribe to God all the excellencies to be found in spirits in a more eminent manner, and to consider them as transcendent and infinite in him. By spirits, I understand not subtilized bodies, extracted out of various things; nor the wind and air, so called because invisible, and very piercing and penetrating, though bodies, and very ponderous ones; nor the spirits of animals, which are material, die, and go downwards to the earth: but rational spirits, angels, and the souls of men; the former are called spirits, Zech. vi. 5. Heb. i. 13. and so are the latter, Job xxxii. 8. Heb. xii. 23. they are indeed created spirits, Psal. civ. 4. Zech. xii. 1. but God an uncreated one, and is the Creator of these, and therefore said to be, "the Father of spirits," Heb. xii. 9. these are creatures of time, and finite beings; made since the world was, and are not every where: but God is an eternal infinite, and immense Spirit, from everlasting to everlasting; and whom "the heaven of heavens cannot contain;" yet there are some excellencies in spirits, which may lead more easily to conceive somewhat of God, and of his divine nature.

Spirits are immaterial, have no corporal parts, as flesh, blood, and bones, Luke xxiv. 39. and though eyes, hands, &c. are ascribed to God, yet not of flesh, Job x. 4. but such as express what is suitable to spiritual beings in the most exalted sense. Spirits are incorruptible; for having no matter about them, they are not liable to corruption; they are, indeed, capable of moral corruption, as appears from the angels that sinned, and from the depravity of the souls of men by the fall; but not of natural corruption: but God is not subject to corruption in any sense, and is therefore called the *incorruptible God*, Rom. i. 23. Spirits are immortal; angels die not, Luke xx. 36. the souls of men cannot be killed, Matt. x. 28. not consisting of parts, that are capable of being divided and separated, they cannot be brought to destruction. It is one of the characters of God, that he is immortal, yea, only hath immortality; and so more transcendently, and in a more eminent manner immortal than angels, and the souls of men; he has it of himself, and underivatively, and is the giver of it to others, 1 Tim. i. 17. and vi. 16. Spirits are invisible; it is a vulgar mistake that they are to be seen; who ever saw the soul of a man? or an angel, in its pure form? whenever they have made themselves visible, it has been by assuming another form, and human one. "God is invisible and dwells in light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see," 1 Tim. i. 17. and vi. 16. and therefore as no likeness and similitude of a spirit can be formed and taken, so none of God: who can tell of what colour, form and figure, shape and size, the soul of a man is? nor can any describe the form and figure of an angel: as for the pictures, paintings, and sculptures of them, they are the fruit of mere fancy and imagination, and at most but emblematical: because angels have appeared in an human form, therefore they are painted as young men; and because of their quick dispatch, and swiftness, in doing the errands and messages they have been sent upon, wings are given them; but never was such a creature in real being, or ever seen in the whole world, in any age, as a young man with wings at his shoulders. So no likeness can be formed of God: no similitude was ever seen of him, and to whom can be likened and compared? Deut. iv. 12. Isai. xl. 18. and xlvi. 5. Some of the Heathens[r] have acknowledged the invisibility of God, as a Spirit; and Aristotle[s] argues the invisibility of God, from the invisibility of the soul of man.

But besides these properties, there are others still more excellent in spirits, by which they approach nearer to God, and bear a greater resemblance to him, and serve to give us clearer ideas of his nature; they are living, active, endowed with understanding, will, and affections; they are lively, have a principle of life; angels are commonly thought to be the living creatures in Ezekiel's vision; however, they are such, and so the souls of men: the body of Adam, when first made, was a lifeless lump of clay; but when God breathed into him the breath of life, "he became a living soul," Gen. ii. 7. God is the living God, has life in and of himself, and gives life to all creatures that have it. Spirits are active, and can operate upon others, as the souls of men on their bodies; God is all act, *actus simplicissimus*, as he is sometimes stiled, the most simple act; there is nothing passive in him, as matter, to be wrought upon; he works, and always works; and "all creatures live and move, and have their being in him," John v. 17. Acts xvii. 28. Spirits, angels, and the souls of men, are intelligent beings, have a faculty of understanding things natural and spiritual; the understanding of God is infinite, there is no searching of it, he understands himself, and all created beings, and their natures, Psal. cxlvii. 6. Isai. xl. 28. Spirits have the power of willing, they are voluntary agents; and God wills whatever he does, and does whatever he wills; his will is boundless, uncontroulable, and sovereign, Psal. cxv. 3. Dan. iv. 35. Spirits have the affections of love, mercy, pity, &c. God not only loves his creatures, but "is love itself," 1 John iv. 16. "His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, on them that fear him;" and he pities them as a father pities his children, Psal. ciii. 13, 17.

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[r] Philemon & Orpheus apud Juſtin, de Monarch. p. 104, 105. [s] De Mundo, c. 6. so Minutius Felix, in octavio, p. 35, 36.

III. God being a Spirit, we learn that he is a simple[1] and uncompounded Being, and does not consist of parts, as a body does; his spirituality involves his simplicity; some indeed consider this as an attribute of God; and his spirituality also; and, indeed, every attribute of God, is God himself, is his nature, and are only so many ways of considering it, or are so many displays of it. However, it is certain God is not composed of parts, in any sense; not in a physical sense, of essential parts, as matter and form, of which bodies consist: nor of integral parts, as soul and body, of which men consist: nor in a metaphysical sense, as of essence and existence, of act and power: nor in a logical sense, as of kind and difference, substance and accident; all which would argue imperfection, weakness, and mutability. If God was composed of parts he would not be eternal, and absolutely the first Being, since the composing parts, would, at least, co-exist with him; besides, the composing parts, in our conception of them, would be prior to the compositum; as the body and soul of man, of which he is composed, are prior to his being a man: and, beside, there must be a composer, who puts the parts together, and therefore must be before what is composed of them; all which is inconsistent with the eternity of God: nor would he be infinite and immense; for either these parts are finite, or infinite; if finite they can never compose an infinite Being; and if infinite, there must be more infinites than one, which implies a contradiction: nor would he be independent; for what is composed of parts, depends upon those parts, and the union of them, by which it is preserved: nor would he be immutable, unalterable, and immortal; since what consists of parts, and depends upon the union of them, is liable to alteration, and to be resolved into those parts again, and so be dissolved and come to destruction. In short, he would not be the most perfect of Beings; for as the more spiritual a being is, the more perfect it is; and so it is, the more simple and uncompounded it is; as even all things in nature are more noble, and more pure, the more free they are from composition and mixture.

Nor is the simplicity of God to be disproved by the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; for though there are three distinct persons, there is but one nature and essence common to them all, and which is not parted and divided among them but is jointly and equally possessed by them; nor do these persons really differ from the divine nature and essence, nor from one another, but by their distinct modes of subsisting: so that they only distinguish and modify, but do neither divide nor compose the divine nature: nor is it to be disproved by the decrees of God; the decrees of God are within himself, and, as it is commonly said, whatever is in God, is God, and so are no other than God himself, as to the act of decreeing, though not with respect to the things decreed; and though they are many and various, as to the objects of them, yet not in God, who, by one eternal act, in his infinite mind, has decreed every thing that has been, is, or shall be; and this is what Plato[u] means by *εν καὶ πολλα* one and many in God; one as to his essence; many, as to the ideas and decrees in it, which many are one: nor is it to be disproved by the attributes of God; for they are no other than God himself, and neither differ from one another, but with respect to their objects, and effects, and in our manner of conception of them; nor from the nature and essence of God; they are himself, and his nature; he is not only eternal, wise, good, loving, &c. but he is eternity itself, wisdom itself, goodness itself, love itself, &c. and these are not parts of his nature, but displays of the same undivided nature, and are different considerations of it, in which we view it; our minds being so weak as not to be able to conceive of God at once and together, and in the gross, but one thing after another, and the same in different lights, that we may better understand it: these several things, called attributes, which are one in God, are predicated of him, and ascribed to him distinctly, for helps to our finite understandings, and for the relief of our minds; and that we, with more facility and ease, might conceive of the nature of God, and take in more of him as we can by parcels and piecemeals, than in the whole; and so, as a learned Jew[w] observes, all those attributes are only intellectual notions; by which are conceived the perfections that are in the essence of God, but in reality are nothing but his essence; and which attributes will be next considered.

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[1] ἁπλουν τε ειναι, και παντων ηκιστα της εαυτου ιδεας εκβαινειν, is simple, and least of all departs from his own idea,—remains always simply in his own form, Plato de Repub. l. 2. p. 606.

OF THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD.

THE attributes of God are variously distinguished by divines; some distinguish them into negative and positive, or affirmative: the negative are such as remove from him whatever is imperfect in creatures; such are infinity, immutability, immortality, &c. which deny him to be finite, mutable, and mortal; and, indeed, it is easier to say what God is not, than what he is: the positive, or affirmative, are such as assert some perfection in God, which is in and of himself; and which in the creatures, in any measure, is from him, as wisdom, goodness, justice, holiness, &c. but the distinction is discarded by others; because in all negative attributes some positive excellency is found. Some distribute them into a two-fold order, first and second: Attributes, or essential properties of the first order, declare the essence of God as in himself, such as his simplicity and perfection, infinity and immutability; and attributes, or esential properties of the second order, which though primarily and properly, and naturally, and infinitely, and in a more excellent manner are in God, than in creatures: yet secondarily, and in an analogical sense, are in them, there being some similitude of them in them, of which there is none of the former order in them; these are said to be life and immortality, blessedness and glory. Again, some are said to be absolute, and others relative: absolute ones are such as eternally agree with the essence of God, without respect to his creatures, and are expressed by names, Jehovah, Jah, &c. relative ones are such as agree with him in time, with some certain respect to his creatures, and are expressed by his being their Creator, Governor, Preserver, Redeemer, &c. some are called proper, as those before mentioned; and others figurative, signified by the parts of the human body, and the affections of the mind, as observed in the preceding chapter: but the more commonly received distinction of the attributes of God, is into the communicable and incommunicable ones; the incommunicable attributes of God, are such as there is no appearance or shadow of them in creatures; as independence, immutability, immensity, and eternity: communicable ones, are such as are common to God, with men; or, however, of which there is some resemblance in men, as goodness, holiness, justice, and wisdom; yet of these it may be said, that they are incommunicable, as they are in God, in whom they are infinite, and cannot, as such, be communicated to finite creatures: none but God is essentially, originally, underivately, perfectly, and infinitely good, holy, just, and wise. But as God is defined a Spirit in Scripture, as has been observed, I shall endeavour to sort the perfections and attributes of God in agreement with that: and with respect to his nature, as an uncreated Spirit, may be referred, besides his spirituality and simplicity, already considered, his immutability, and infinity, which includes his immensity, or omnipresence, and eternity: and with respect to it as active, and operative, the life of God, and his omnipotence: and with respect to the faculties, as a rational spirit, particularly the understanding, to which may belong, his omniscience, and manifold wisdom; and the will, under which may be considered the acts of that, and the sovereignty of it; and the affections, to which may be reduced, the love, grace, mercy, hatred, anger, patience, and long-suffering of God: and lastly, under the notions of qualities and virtues, may be considered, his goodness, holiness, justice, truth, and faithfulness; and, as the complement of the whole, his perfection or all-sufficiency, glory, and blessedness: and in this order I shall consider them. And begin with,

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[u] In Philebo, p. 372, &c. and in Parmenide, p. 1210, &c. [w] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 8.

The Immutability of God; which arises from, and is closely connected with his spirituality and simplicity, or is what agrees with him, and is necessary to him as a spiritual, simple and uncompounded Being[1].

Immutability is an attribute which God claims, and challenges as peculiar to himself; *I am the Lord, I change not,* Mal. iii. 6. Mutability belongs to creatures, immutability to God only; creatures change, but he does not: the heavens and the earth, which he has made, are not always the same; but "he is the same for ever:" the visible heavens are often changing; they are sometimes serene and clear, at other times covered with clouds and darkness, and filled with meteors, snow, rain, hail, &c. the face of the earth appears different at the various seasons of the year, and is particularly renewed every spring: it has undergone one great change by a flood, and will undergo another by fire; when that, and *the works that are therein, shall be burnt up*; *and the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved*; *and the elements shall melt with fervent heat*; and *new heavens*, and *a new earth*, shall succeed, 2 Pet. iii. 10—13. to which changeableness in them the unchangeableness of God is opposed: *All of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed*; *but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end*, Psal. cii. 25—27. The sun in the firmament, that great luminary, and fountain of light and heat, in allusion to which, God is called the Father of lights, has its parallaxes, or various appearances, at morning, noon, and evening; it has its risings and settings; and never rises and sets at the same point in the heavens one day in the year, but always varies a little; it is sometimes under clouds, and in an eclipse; but with God is no variableness, *παραλλαγη* or a parallax; the sun, at certain seasons of the year, passes from one tropic, and enters into another, as well as casts shades on the earth; but with God there is no shadow of turning, *τροπης* or a trope, or tropic; there is no mutation nor turning in him, nor shadow of any, James i. 17. see Job xxiii. 13. the inhabitants of heaven and earth are changeable, even the most excellent of them, angels and men: angels in their original nature and state, were subject to change, as the apostacy of many of them have shewn; who have changed both state and place; they kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, being obliged to the latter, because of the former; for sinning against God, they were hurled out of heaven, and *cast down to hell, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment*, Jude 6. 2 Pet. ii. 4. the angels which stood when the rest fell, are now indeed become impeccable, and are firmly settled in their state of integrity; but then this is owing not to their own nature, but to the electing grace of God, in Christ, and to the confirming grace of Christ, their head, who is the *head of all principality and power*, 1 Tim. v. 21. Col. ii. 10. Man, at his best estate, his estate of innocence, and integrity, was altogether vanity: for though not sinful, yet being mutable, and left to the mutability of his will, which was his vanity, when tempted, fell into sin; and though made upright, lost the rectitude of his nature; though made after the image of God, soon came short of that glory; and though he had dominion over the creatures, being in honour, he abode not long, but became like those he had the power over; and though placed in the most delightful and fruitful spot in all the globe, yet rebelling against his Maker and Benefactor, was driven out from thence by him; and is now a creature subject to innumerable changes in life; diseases of various sorts sieze his body, and change his beauty and his strength, and death at last turns him to corruption and dust; he is like the changeable grass of the field; flourishes a while, is then cut down, and whithers away; but God and his word endure for ever the same, 1 Pet. i. 24, 25. good men are very mutable, both in their inward and outward estate: in spiritual affairs; in the frames of their minds, in the affections of their souls, in the exercise of grace, in their devotion and obedience to God, and worship of him: in temporal affairs; what an instance of mutability was Job, in his estate, in his family, and in his health and friends? well might he say, *changes and war are against me*, Job x. 17. and at length came to his great and last change, death; as all men must, even the best of men: indeed, in the future state, good men will be no more subject to change; their spirits will be made perfect, and sin no more, nor sorrow any more; and their bodies, when raised, will remain immortal, incorruptible, spiritual, powerful, and glorious; but this will be owing, not to themselves, but to the unchangeable grace and power of God: God only is in and of himself immutable; and he is unchangeable in his nature, perfections, and purposes, and in his love and affections to his people, and in his covenant, and the blessings and promises of it; and even in his threatenings.

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[1] το θειον αμεταβλητον αναγκαιον ειναι, Ariſtot. de Coelo, l. 1. c. 9. πας θεος αμεταβλητος, Salluſt. de Diis, c. 1. 2.

1. In his nature and essence, being simple, and devoid of all composition, as has been proved: the more simple and free from mixture and composition any thing is, the less subject to change. Gold and silver, being the purest and freest of all metals from composition, are not so alterable as others: spirits, being uncompounded, and not consisting of parts, are not so changeable as bodies; and God, being an infinite and uncreated Spirit, and free from composition in every sense, is intirely and perfectly immutable: and since he is eternal, there can be no change of time with him; time doth not belong to him, only to a creature, which is the measure of its duration; and began when a creature began to be, and not before; but God is before all creatures; they being made by him, and so before time; he was the same before the day was as now, and now as he was before; "even the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever:" though he is the ancient of days, he does not become older and older; he is no older now than he was millions of ages ago, nor will be millions of ages to come; his eternity is an everlasting and unchangeable *now*; *He is the same, and his years shall have no end*, Psal. cii. 27. see Heb. xiii. 8. and seeing he is infinite, immense, and omnipresent; there can be no change of place with him, for he fills heaven and earth with his presence; he is every where, and cannot change or move from place to place; when therefore he is said to come down on earth, or to depart from men, it is not to be understood of local motion, or change of place; but of some uncommon exertion of his power, and demonstration of his presence, or of the withdrawment of some benefit from them: but this will be considered more largely under the attribute of omnipresence, in its proper place. God is the most perfect Being, and therefore can admit of no change in his nature, neither of increase nor decrease, of addition nor diminution; if he changes, it must be either for the better or the worse; if for the better, then he was imperfect before, and so not God: if for the worse, then he becomes imperfect; and the same follows: a like reasoning is used by Plato[y], and by another ancient philosopher[z], who asserts that God is good, impassible and unchangeable; for whatsoever is changed, says he, is either for the better or the worse; if for

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[y] De Republica, l. 2. p. 608.

[z] Sallustius de Diis & Mundo, c. 1.

the worse, it becomes bad; and if for the better, it was bad at first. Or if he changes from an infinitely perfect state, to another equally so, then there must be more infinites than one, which is a contradiction. Again, if any change is made in him, it must be either from somewhat within him, or from somewhat without him; if from within, he must consist of parts; there must be another and another in him; he must consist of act and power; there must be not only something active in him, to work upon him, but a passive power to be wrought upon; which is contrary to his simplicity, already established; for, as a Jew[a] well argues, what necessarily exists of itself, has no other cause by which it can be changed; nor that which changes, and that which is changed, cannot be together; for so there would be in it two, one which changes, and another which is changed, and so would be compound; which is inconsistent with the simplicity of God: if from somewhat without him, then there must be a superior to him, able to move and change him; but he is the most high God; there is none in heaven nor in earth above him; he is "God over all, blessed for ever."

Nor is the immutability of the divine nature to be disproved from the creation of the world, and all things in it; as when it is suggested, God, from a non-agent, became an agent, and acquired a new relation, that of a Creator, from whence mutability is argued: but it should be observed, that God had from all eternity the same creative power, and would have had, if he had never created any thing; and when he put it forth in time, it was according to his unchangeable will in eternity, and produced no change in him; the change was in the creatures made, not in him the Maker; and though a relation results from hence, and which is real in creatures, is only nominal in the Creator, and makes no change in his nature.

Nor the unchangeableness of the divine nature to be disproved by the incarnation of Christ; for though he, a divine Person, possessed of the divine nature, was made flesh, or became man; the divine nature in him was not changed into the human nature, nor the human nature into the divine, nor a third nature made out of them both; was this the case, the divine nature would have been changeable; but so it was not; for as it has been commonly said, "Christ remained what he was, and assumed what he was not;" and what he assumed added nothing to his divine person; he was only manifest in the flesh; he neither received any perfection, nor imperfection, from the human nature; though that received dignity and honour by its union to him, and was adorned with the gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure, and is now advanced at the right hand of God. Nor was any change made in the divine nature by the sufferings of Christ; the divine nature is impassible, and is one reason why Christ assumed the human nature, that he might be capable of suffering and dying in the room and stead of his people; and though the Lord of life and glory was crucified, and God purchased the church with his own blood, and the blood of Christ is called the blood of the Son of God; yet he was crucified in the human nature only, and his blood was shed in that, to which the divine person gave virtue and efficacy, through its union to it; but received no change by all this.

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[a] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 8.

II. God is unchangeable in his perfections or attributes; which, though they are the same with himself, his nature and essence, as has been observed; yet, considering them separately, they are helps to our better understanding of it, and serve particularly to illustrate the unchangeableness of it: thus, for instance, he is the same in his power as ever; though that has been displayed in various instances, in creation, providence, &c. it is not exhausted, nor in the least diminished; his hand is not shortened, his strength is everlasting, his power eternal, invariably the same: his knowledge is the same; his understanding his infinite, it can neither be increased nor lessened; the knowledge of angels and men increases gradually; but not so the knowledge of God, he knows no more now than he did from all eternity, he knew as much then as he does now; for he knows and sees all things together, and at once, in his vast eternal mind, and not one thing after another, as they appear in time; things past, present, and to come, are all beheld by him in one view; that is, which are so with respect to creatures, for with him there is no such consideration: his goodness, grace, and mercy, are immutable; though there has been such a profusion of his goodness to his creatures, and so many good and perfect gifts have been bestowed on them, it is still the same in him, without any abatement; he is abundant in it, and it endures continually the same: and so is his grace, which has been exceedingly abundant; he is as gracious and merciful as ever; "his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, to them that fear him;" and his faithfulness he never suffers to fail; even though men believe not, he abides faithful; and the unbelief of men cannot make the faith or faithfulness of God without effect. And as he is glorious in holiness, that perfection never receives any tarnish, can never be sullied, but is always illustriously the same; there is no unrighteousness in God, he cannot change from holiness to unholiness, from righteousness to unrighteousness; he is the just one, that neither can nor will do iniquity; and so he is unchangeably good, and unchangeably happy, and immutable in every perfection.

III. God is unchangeable in his purposes and decrees, there is a purpose for every thing, and a time for that purpose; God has determined all that ever was, is, or shall be; all come to pass according to the counsel of his will, and all his decrees are unchangeable; they are like the laws of the Medes and Persians, and more unalterable than they were; they are the mountains of brass Zechariah saw in a vision, from whence proceed the providences of God, and the executioners of them, Zech. vi. 1. called mountains because of their immoveableness, and mountains of brass to denote their greater firmness and stability: immutability is expressly spoken of the counsel of God, Heb. vi. 17. the purposes of God are always carried into execution, they are never frustrated; it is not in the power of men and devils to disannul them; whatever devices and counter-workings to them may be framed and formed, they are of no avail; "*the counsel of the Lord* *stands for ever.*" Psal. xxxiii. 11. Prov. xix. 21. and xxi. 30. Isai. xiv. 24, 27 and xlvi. 10. the purposes of God are within himself, Eph. i. 9. and what is in himself, is himself, and he can as soon cease to be as to alter his mind, or change his counsels; and they are eternal, Eph. iii. 11. no new thoughts arise in his mind, no new resolutions are formed in his breast, no new decrees are made by him; his counsels are of old; and his purposes are called counsels, because designs wisely formed by men, are with consultation, and upon mature deliberation: and such are the decrees of God, they are made with the highest wisdom by him, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, and so are unchangeable: and besides, being all-knowing, he sees and declares the end from the beginning, and nothing unforeseen ever can appear to hinder the execution of his intentions and determinations; which is sometimes the case with men: and he is able to perform whatever he resolves upon; there is no lack of wisdom, nor of power in him, as often is in men; and he is faithful to himself, his purposes and decrees; his counsels of old are faithfulness and truth; or are truly and faithfully performed.

Nor is the immutability of the decrees of God to be disproved by his providences, which are many and various, unsearchable and past finding out, and which may seem to differ from, and clash with one another; for all the changes in providence, whether with respect to the world in general, or with respect to individuals, are according to his unchangeable will. Job was a remarkable instance of changes in providence, and yet he was fully persuaded of the unchangeable will of God in them, and which he strongly expresses; *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him,* Job. xxiii. 13, 14. Nor is it to be disproved by the different declarations of the will of God, what he would have observed and done, in the different dispensations of law and gospel. God, by Moses, ordered the children of Israel, to observe certain laws, rites, and ceremonies, until the time of reformation, and then there was a disanulling of them; the heavens and earth were shaken, that is, the whole Mosaic œconomy and dispensation, whereby these were removed and laid aside as useless, and other ordinances were fixed, to remain till Christ's second coming; but then the delivery of the one, and the time of their continuance, and the abolition of them, and the settling of the other gospel-ordinances to remain to the end of the world, were all according to the unchangeable will of God.

Nor is prayer any objection to the immutability of the divine will, which is not to be altered by it; for when the mind of God is not towards a people to do them good, it cannot be turned to them by the most fervent and importunate prayers of those who have the greatest interest in him, Jer. xv. 1. and when he bestows blessings on a praying people, it is not for the sake of their prayers, as if he was inclined and turned by them: but for his own sake, and of his own sovereign will and pleasure. Should it be said, to what purpose then is prayer? it is answered, this is the way and means God has appointed, for the communication of the blessings of his goodness to his people; for though he has purposed, provided, and promised them, yet he will be sought unto, to give them to them, and it is their duty and privilege to ask them of him, and when they are blessed with a spirit of prayer, it forbodes well, and looks as if God intended to bestow the good things asked; and which should be asked always with submission to the will of God, saying, not my will, but thine be done.

IV. God is unchangeable in his love and affections to his people; "his love to them is from everlasting to everlasting," without any variation in his own heart, however different the manifestations of it may be to them; he ever rests in his love, and never alters, nothing can seperate from it, he is love itself, and it is as unchangeable as himself, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever: the fall made no difference in it, though the special objects of it fell with Adam, in his transgression, into the depths of sin and misery; this hindered not, but God continued his love, and manifested it in sending his Son to be the propitiation for their sins, and commended it, and gave a full proof and demonstration of it, in the delivery of Christ to death for them, even while they were yet sinners: nor does the sinful state and condition they were brought into, and continue in from their birth to their conversion, make any alteration in his love; but notwithstanding that, for the great love with which he loves them, he "quickens them when dead in trespasses and sins;" he looks upon them in all the impurity of their natural state, and says to them, live; and this time, as it is a time of life, it is a time of open love; see Eph. ii. 4, 5. Ezek. xvi. 6—8. Tit. iii. 3—5. Nor do the hidings of God's face from them after conversion, prove any change in his love to them; for though he hides his face from them, and forsakes them for a moment, in a little seeming wrath, to shew his resentment at their sins, to bring them to a sense of them, to humble them before him, and to cause them to seek his face and favour; yet with great mercies he gathers them again to himself, in the most tender manner, and with loving-kindness, has mercy on them; and, for the strengthening of their faith in his love, swears he will not be wroth with them; and declares his loving-kindness to be more immoveable than hills and mountains, Isai. liv. 7—10. Afflictions are no evidence of a change of affections to them; though he may thoroughly chastize them, and, as they may think, severely, yet he deals with them but as children, and, like Ephraim, they are his dear sons and daughters, and pleasant children, in whom he takes the utmost complacency and delight; chastenings are rather proofs of sonship, than arguments against it. God's rebukes of them are rebukes in love, and not in wrath and hot displeasure; though he visits their transgressions with a rod and stripes, he does not utterly, nor at all, take away his loving-kindness in Christ from them, Jer. xxxi. 18, 20. Heb. xii. 6—8. Rev. iii. 19. Psal. lxxxix. 32, 33. Nor is the unchangeableness of the love of God to his people to be disproved by his being said to be angry with them, and then to turn away his anger from them, Isa. xii. 1, for anger is not opposite to love. Jacob was angry with his beloved Rachel, and a father may be angry with his beloved child, and love him not the less. Wrath and hatred are opposed to love, which are never in the heart of God towards his beloved ones: besides, this is said after the manner of men, and according to our apprehension of things; the Lord doing somewhat similar to men, when they are angry, who frown and turn away; and when God frowns in his providence, and deserts his people for a while, they judge he his angry, when it only shews his displicency at their sins, but not at their persons; and then, when he smiles upon them again, and manifests his pardoning grace and mercy, they conclude he has turned himself from the fierceness of his anger, Psal. lxxxv. 2, 3.

v. God is unchangeable in his covenant of grace. This was made with Christ from everlasting, and stands fast with him; it is as immoveable as a rock, and can never be broken; the blessings of it are sure mercies, flow from the sovereign grace and mercy of God. and are sure and firm, being according to his unchangeable will, and are what he never repents of, nor revokes; and being once bestowed, are irreversible, and never taken away; such as are blessed with them are always blessed, and it is not in the power of men and devils to reverse them, Rom. xi. 29. and viii. 30. the promises of the covenant, which are gone out of his mouth and lips are unalterable; what has been said of purposes, may be said of promises, that they were made before the world were, by God, that cannot lie, who is all-wise, all-knowing, and all-powerful, and faithful to perform them; and besides, "all the promises are yea and amen in Christ." Nay, even God is unchangeable in his threatenings, he watches to bring the evil he has threatened, as well as the good he has promised; and he assuredly performs the one as the other, Dan. ix. 14. see Isai. i. 20. Jer. xxiii. 20.

Nor is the unchangeableness of God in his word, whether in a way of promise or threatening, to be disproved by repentance being ascribed to him, which is to be taken in a limited sense, for in some sense it is absolutely denied of him, Numb. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. When it is spoken of him, it is to be understood improperly and figuratively, after the manner of men, he doing like what men do, when they repent, that is, undo what they have done; as a potter, when he does not like a vessel he has made, breaks it to pieces: so when it repented God that he had made man on earth, and Saul king, Gen. vi. 6. 1 Sam. xv. 11. he destroyed man from off the earth, whom he had created; and took away the kingdom from Saul, and his family, and gave it to another: in doing which he did not change his mind, but his operations and providences, and that according to his unchangeable will.

Nor is the Immutability of God, in his promises and threatenings, to be disproved, by observing, that the promised good, and threatened evil, are not always done. For it should be considered, that what is promised or threatened, is either absolutely and unconditionally, or with a condition: now that any thing promised or threatened, absolutely and unconditionally, is not performed, must be denied; but if with a condition, and that condition not performed, the change will appear to be not in God, but in men: and in all such cases where God does not what he said he would do, a condition is either expressed or implied; see Jer. xviii. 8—10. Thus God promised that he would dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem, in the temple, and there should be his rest for ever, Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14. and the people of Israel should dwell in their land, and eat the good of it; but then it was, provided they were obedient to God, and abode in his service and worship, and kept his laws and ordinances, Isai. i. 19. but they failing herein, he departed from them, and suffered them to be carried captive: in all which there was a change of his dispensations; but no change of his will. He threatened the Ninevites with the destruction of their city within forty days, that is, unless they repented: they did repent, and were saved from ruin, God repenting of what he had threatened; which, though a change of his outward conduct towards them, he threatened them with, was no change of his will; for both their repentance, and their deliverance, were according to his unchangeable will, Jonah iii. 4, 10. Nor is the case of Hezekiah any objection to the immutability of God; the outward declaration ordered to be made to him, was, that he should die and not live; as he must have done quickly, according to the nature of second causes, his disease being mortal; but the secret will of God was, that he should live fifteen years longer, as he did; which implies neither contradiction nor change: the outward declaration was made to humble Hezekiah, to set him a praying, and to make use of means: whereby the unchangeable will of God was accomplished.

OF THE INFINITY, OMNIPRESENCE, AND ETERNITY OF GOD.

THE next Attribute of God to be considered is, his Infinity; when we say that God is infinite, the meaning is, that he is unbounded and unlimited, unmeasurable or immense, unsearchable and not to be comprehended. This attribute chiefly respects and includes the omnipresence and eternity of God; these are the two branches of it; he is not bounded by space, and therefore is every where; and he is not bounded by time, so he is eternal[b]: and that he is in this sense infinite appears from his spirituality and simplicity, before established; he is not a body, consisting of parts; was he, he would be finite; for body, or matter, is a creature of time, and not eternal; and is limited to a certain place, and so not every where; but God is a Spirit: though this barely is not sufficient to prove him infinite; because there are finite spirits, as angels, and the souls of men; these are created spirits, and have a beginning, though they will have no end; which is owing not to themselves, but to the power of God, that supports them in their being; who could, if he would, annihilate them; and they are definitively in some place, and so, on all accounts, finite: but God is an uncreated Spirit; was before all time, so not bounded by it; and was before space or place were, and existed without it; and so not to be limited to it, and by it. He is the first Being, and from whom all others have their being; *Before him there was no God formed, neither shall there be after him*; yea, he is the first and the last, Isai. xliii. 10. and xliv. 6. and therefore there is none before him nor above him, to limit and restrain him: he is an independent Being; all creatures depend on him, but he depends on none; all things are of him, through him, and to him, as the first cause and last end of them[c]: all creatures live, and move, and have their being in him; but not he in them: men, angels, good and bad, are checked and limited by him; but not he by them. He is immutable; this attribute has been already established; but if he changes place, or is moved from place to place, or is sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another, he would be mutable: and if he rose from non-existence into existence, or there is any end of his days, he would not be unchangeable; but he is the same, and his years shall have no end: Immutability infers both omnipresence and eternity, the two branches of Infinity. We commonly say that sin is infinite, and the truest reason that can be given for it is, because God is the object of it; for as an act, it is finite, being the act of a finite creature; but with respect to the object against whom it is committed, it is infinite, and requires an infinite satisfaction; which none but an infinite person can give, and which Christ is in his divine nature, and so gave to his sufferings and death, in his human nature united to him, an infinite value and virtue, whereby justice had from them an infinite satisfaction.

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[b] το τον απαντα χρονον και την απειριαν περιεχον τελος, αιων εστι. Ariſtot. de Coelo, l. 1. c. 9.

God is infinite in all his attributes; and which are indeed, himself, his nature, as has been observed, and are separately considered by us, as a relief to our mind, and helps to our better understanding it; and, perhaps, by observing some of these distinctly, we may have a clearer idea of the infinity of God. His understanding is infinite, as is expressly said, Psal. cxlvii. 5. it reaches to, and comprehends all things that are, though ever so numerous; to the innumerable company of angels in the highest heavens; to the innumerable stars in the lower ones; to the innumerable inhabitants of the earth, men, beasts, and fowl; and to the innumerable creatures that swim in the sea; yea, not only to all that are in being but to all things possible to be made, which God could have made if he would; these he sees and knows in his eternal mind, so that there is *no searching of his understanding*, Isai. xl. 28. there is no end of it, and therefore infinite. The same may be said of his knowledge and wisdom, there is a βαθος, a depth, the apostle ascribes, to both; and which is not to be sounded by mortals, Rom. xi. 33. he is a God of knowledge, or knowledges, of all things that are knowable, 1 Sam. ii. 3. he is the only and the all-wise God; and in comparison of him the wisdom of the wisest of creatures, the angels, is but folly, Job. iv. 18. The power of God is infinite; with him nothing is impossible; his power has never been exerted to the uttermost; he that has made one world, could have made millions; there is no end of his power, and his making of that, proves his eternal power, that is, his infinite power; for nothing but infinite power could ever have made a world out of nothing, Rom. i. 20. Heb. xi. 3. His goodness is infinite, he is abundant in it, the earth is full of it, all creatures partake of it, and it endures continually; though there has been such a vast profusion of it from the beginning of the world, in all ages, it still abounds: there is no end of it, it is infinite, it is boundless; nor can there be any addition to it; it is infinitely perfect, *my goodness extends not to thee*, Psal. xvi. 2. God is infinite in his purity, holiness, and justice: there is none holy as he is; or pure and righteous, with him; in comparison of him, the most holy creatures are impure, and cover themselves before him, Job. iv. 17, 18. Isai. vi. 2, 3. in short, he is infinitely perfect, and infinitely blessed and happy. We rightly give him titles and epithets of immense and incomprehensible, which belong to his infinity. He is immense, that is, unmeasurable; he measures all things, but is measured by none; who can take his dimensions? they are as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? If the heavens above cannot be measured, and the foundations of the earth beneath cannot be searched out, how should he be measured or searched out to perfection that made all these? Job. xi. 7—9. Jer. xxxi. 37. As there is an height, a depth, a length and breadth in the love of God, immeasurable, Eph. iii. 18. so there is in every attribute of God, and consequently in his nature; his immensity is his magnitude, and of his greatness it is said, that it is unsearchable, Psal. cxlv 3. and therefore, upon the whole, must be incomprehensible; not only cannot be comprehended and circumscribed by space, or in place, for the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; but he is not to be comprehended by finite minds, that cannot conceive of him as he is; his omniscience is too wonderful for them, and the thunder of his power who can understand? Somewhat of him may be apprehended, but his nature and essence can never be comprehended, no not in a state of perfection; sooner may all the waters of the ocean be put into a nutshell, than that the infinite Being of God should be comprehended by angels or men, who are finite creatures; infinity is an attribute peculiar to God, and, as has been observed, its two chief branches are omnipresence and eternity; which will be next considered.

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[c] απειρον αρα το εν, ει μητε αρχην μητε τελευτην εχει. Plato in Parmenide, p. 1117. Nihil cum habeat extremum, infinitum sit necesse est, Cicero de Divinat. l. 2. c. 50.

The Omnipresence of God, or his ubiquity, which, as it is included in his infinity, is a branch of it, and strictly connected with it, it must be strongly concluded from it; for if God is infinite, that is, unbounded with respect to space and place, then he must be every where; and this is to be proved from his power, which is every where; as appears, not only in the creation of all things, as the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth, and the ends of them, and all that is in them; but in his providence, supporting and sustaining them; for not only the creatures have their being in him, and from him, and therefore he must be near them; but "he upholds all things by his power," they consist in him, he provides for them, and preserves them all; and which is the argument the apostle uses to prove that he is not far from them, Acts xvii. 27, 28. The omnipresence of God may be argued from the distributions of his goodness to all; to angels and glorified saints, who partake of his special favours; to all men on earth, to whom he does not leave himself without a witness of his kindness to them, giving them food and raiment, and all things richly to enjoy; he is present among them, and opens his hand and plentifully and liberally communicates to them: as well as from his universal government of the world by his wisdom; for his kingdom rules over all, the kingdom of nature and providence is his, and "he is the Governor among the nations." And as he is every where by his power and providence, so he is by his knowledge; all things are naked and open to him, being all before him, and he present with them; though he is in the highest heaven, he can see and judge through the dark clouds, and behold all the inhabitants of the world, and their actions: and since these attributes of power, wisdom, and knowledge, are no other than his nature, or than himself, he must be every where by his essence; and which is most clear from the omnipresence of the divine nature in Christ, who, as a divine person, was in heaven, when he, as man, was here on earth, John i. 18. and iii. 13. and, indeed, unless he was omnipresent, he could not be in whatsoever place two or three are gathered together in his name, or be in the midst of the candlesticks, the churches, or with his ministers, to the end of the world, Matt. xviii. 20. and xxviii. 29. for though this is to be understood of his gracious presence, yet unless he was omnipresent, this could not be vouchsafed to all the saints, and all the churches, in all ages, at different places, at the same time; as when they are worshipping in different parts of the world; as in Europe, so in America. Now if God, personally considered, or in any one of the divine Persons, is omnipresent, then God, essentially considered, must be so. The presence of God may be observed in a different manner; there is his glorious presence in heaven; where he, in a most eminent manner, displays the glory of his majesty to angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; and there is his powerful and providential presence with all his creatures, giving them being, and supporting them in it; and there is his gracious presence with good men, regenerating, sanctifying, comforting, and refreshing them; dwelling in them, carrying on his work of grace in them, to fit them for himself in glory; and all suppose his omnipresence: the heathens acknowledge this attribute; Anaxagoras calls him an infinite mind; and Pythagoras[d] defines him, a mind that is diffused throughout all the parts of the world, and goes through all nature; and Sallustius[e] observes, that he is not contained or comprehended in place. So the Jews say[f] the Shecinah, or divine Majesty, is every where; and they call God מקום place, by an antiphrasis, as Buxtorf[g] observes, because he is illocal, who is not contained in any place, but gives place to all; and so the

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[d] Ambo apud Lactant. de fals. relig. l. 1. c. 5. [e] De Diis, c. 2. Jovis omnia plena, Virgil. Bucolic. eclog. 3. [f] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 25. 1. [g] In rad. קום

Jews themselves say[h], that he is the place of the world, but not the world his place, for he is without the world, and fills all worlds; and they further say[i], he is so called because in every place where the righteous are, he is with them; or as Aben Ezra[k] expresses it, because every place is full of his glory; agreeable to which Philo, the Jew[l], says, *αυτος εαυτω τοπος*, he is place, full and sufficient to himself.

This attribute is most clearly expressed in several passages of scripture, as particularly in Psal. cxxxix. 7—10. where the Psalmist asks, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?* which, if it is to be understood of the third Person, the Spirit of the Father, and of the Son; if there is no going from him, then not from them, since the same nature is in the one as in the other; if there is no going from God, personally considered, or as in any of the divine Persons, then not from him, as essentially considered: or by his Spirit may be meant himself, for "*God is a Spirit,*" John iv. 24. He adds, *Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* not his gracious presence, for a good man would never seek to flee from that, nothing being more desirable to him; nor is there any thing he more earnestly deprecates than to be cast away from it, Psal. iv. 6, 7. and li. 11. but his essential presence, which is every where; it is in the Hebrew text from thy face; and face signifies the essence and nature of God, which is invisible and incomprehensible, Exod. xxxiii. 20. then the Psalmist goes on to enumerate all places that could be thought of to flee to, and yet God was there; *If I ascend to heaven, thou art there*; could he by any means climb up to heaven, there God is in all the glory of his Majesty; there is his palace, his habitation, and his throne. *If I make my bed in hell, thou art there:* whether the place where the wicked are turned, and the apostate angels cast; there God is sustaining them in their being, pouring in his wrath into their consciences, and continuing the punishment inflicted on them: or whether the grave is meant, which is sometimes the sense of the word used, and is a bed to saints, Job xvii. 13. there God is watching over their dust, preserving it from being lost, in order to raise it up at the last day. *If I take the wings of the morning*, and fly as fast as the morning-light, which soon reaches the furthest parts of the earth; or as the rays of the sun, which dart from East to West, at its rising, instantly; *and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;* in the most remote islands of it, or in the uttermost parts of the Western shore; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me: there should he experience the providential goodness and special favor of God to him; who leads, guides, and upholds his people at the ends of the earth, where some of them sometimes are, and where they have his presence, Isai. xlv. 22. and xxiv. 16. see a like enumeration of places in Amos ix. 2, 3[m]. Another passage of Scripture, proving the Omnipresence of God, is in Isai. lxvi. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is*

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[h] Vid. Baal Aruch in voce מקום. [i] Pirke Elieser, c. 35. [k] Præfat. ad Comment. in lib. Esther. [l] Leg. Allegor. l. 1. p. 48. [m] Quo fugis Encelade, quascumque accesseris oras —sub Jove semper eris — Virgil.

my footstool. So immense is he that he sits upon the one, and treads on the other: Where is the house that ye build unto me? or where can a house be built for him? what place can be found for him he is not possessed of, and does not dwell in already; Stephen, the proto-martyr, produces this to prove, that the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; that is, cannot be included in them, and limited to them, since he is every where, in heaven and in earth, Acts viii. 47—50. But no where is the Omnipresence of God more expressly declared than in Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not afar off?* yea, he is both; he not only observes persons and things in heaven, which may be thought at hand, and near him; but persons and things on earth, and those at the greatest distance; he is as near to, and as present with the one as the other; and he sees and knows all that is done by them, as if he was at their elbow; and therefore adds, Can any hide themselves in secret places, that I shall not see him saith the Lord? As some might foolishly imagine, supposing him to be limited and confined to heaven above, and was not present to see what was done below; especially in the dark and distant places of the earth; Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord; not only with inhabitants, and with all things, the effects of his power and goodness; but with his nature and essence, which exceeds all bounds of place and space. Hence the Jews call God by the name of *Makom*, place; because he fills all places, and is contained in none; is illocal and infinite.

Nor is this to be disproved by other passages of scripture, which may seem, at first sight, to discountenance or contradict it; not such as speak of men's departing and fleeing from his presence, as Cain and Jonah are said to do, Gen. iv. 16. Jonah i. 3. for Cain only went either from the place where he and the Lord had been conversing; or from the public place of worship, at the east of the garden of Eden, where were the symbol of the divine presence, an altar, where he and his brother had sacrificed. Jonah's fleeing, was withdrawing himself from the service of God, and declining to go on his errand; foolishly imagining, that, by going beyond sea, he should avoid being urged to his duty; but he soon found his mistake, and that God was every where, and could meet with him by sea and by land. Likewise, not such that represent God as descending from heaven; as at the building of Babel, at the cry of the sin of Sodom, and on mount Sinai, Gen. xi. 5, 7. and xviii. 21. Exod. xix. 18, 20. for these only denote some more than ordinary manifestations of his presence, or exertion of his power; as at Babel, by confounding the language; at Sodom, by destroying that, and the other cities; at Sinai, by giving the law out of the midst of fire, attended with thunder and lightening. Nor such as speak of the Lord not being with wicked men; particularly what Moses said to the disobedient Israelites, *The Lord is not among you;* and he *will not be with you,* Numb. xiv. 42, 43. which he might very truly say, since the ark of the covenant, the symbol of the divine presence, remained in the camp, and went not with them, 44. nor had they any reason to believe that God would be so with them, as to prosper and succeed them, when they acted con-

rary to his express command: nor is God ever in such sense with wicked men,
s with good men; namely, by his gracious presence: but this hinders not, but
hat he is with them by his omnipresence and power, supporting them in their
eing. Nor such passages which relate the departure of God from men; as
rom Samson and Saul, Judg. xvi. 20. 1 Sam. xxviii. 15. since this only respects
he withdrawment of uncommon bodily strength from the one; and wisdom and
rudence, courage and greatness of soul, from the other; leaving him to the
ears, distractions, and confusions of his mind; without any hope of success in
ar: no such portions of scripture which express the desertions and distance of
God from his people, and their desires that he would return to them, and not
ast them away from his precence, Psal. x. i. and lxxx. 14. and li. 1. since these
nly respect his gracious presence, the deprivation of that, and the return of it;
e manifestations of his love and favour, and the withdrawment and renewal
f them. And whereas it is urged against the omnipresence of God, that he is
aid to be in heaven, and that to be his habitation; and that men pray unto him
s their Father in heaven, Psal. cxv. 3. Isai. lxiii. 15. Matt. v. 9. In what
eculiar sense God may be said to be in heaven, has been observed already; nor
s he ever said to be in heaven only, but in many places to be on earth also, and
lsewhere; see Deut. iv. 39. Isai. lxvi. 1. though he is not contained in any
lace, as not on the earth, so neither can the heaven of heavens contain him,
Kings viii. 27. he was before there was any space or place; his nature, and
o this attribute of omnipresence, were the same then as now: and should it be
sked, Where did he dwell then? I answer, in himself, in his own immensity
nd eternity; see Isai. lvii. 15. The objection from the pollution of the divine
Being, through sordid and filthy places, in which he must be, if omnipresent,
carce deserves any regard; since bodies only touch them and are capable of
eing defiled by them; not spirits, even created ones, as angels, and the souls of
nen; as the angel in the filthy den of lions where Daniel was, was not; nor
he souls of men that are in filthy bodies; much less God, a pure, infinite, and
ncreated Spirit, who can no more be effected by such means, than the sun is,
y its rays striking on a dunghill.

THE ETERNITY OF GOD belongs to his infinity; for as he is not bounded
y space, so neither by time, and therefore eternal. He is often called the ever-
asting God, and the King eternal, Gen. xxi. 31. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Isai. xl. 28.
Jer. x. 10. Rom. xvi. 28. 1 Tim. i. 17. yea, eternity itself, 1 Sam. xv. 29.
and is said to inhabit it, Isai. lvii. 15. These words, eternal, everlasting, and
for ever, are sometimes used in an unproper sense, as of things which are of a
ong duration, but limited, and have both a beginning and an end; as the ever-
asting possession of the land of Canaan, granted in the everlasting covenant of
circumcision, and yet both are now at an end, Gen. xvii. 7, 8. the rites and
ceremonies of the law of Moses, are said to be ordinances and statutes for ever;
and yet they were designed to continue but for a time, and have been long since

abolished, Numb. x. 8. and xv. 15. and xviii. 8, 11, 19, 23. the temple built by Solomon is said to be a settled place for God to abide in for ever; yea, he himself says, that he would put his name in it for ever; and it should be his rest for ever; and yet it has been demolished long ago, 1 Kings viii. 13, and ix. 3. Psal. cxxxii. 14. the thrones of David and Solomon are said to be established for ever, and yet, if taken in a literal sense, they are no more: indeed, if understood spiritually, as David's Son and Antitype, his throne will be for ever and ever, 2 Sam. vii. 12, 16. the earth is said to abide, and not be removed for ever, Psal. civ. 5. Eccles. i. 4. yet both that and the heavens shall perish, though not as to substance, yet as to quality, form, figure, and present use. Sometimes this phrase for ever, only respects the year of jubilee, Exod. xxi. 6. and, at most, but during life, 1 Sam. i. 21.

Some creatures and things are said to be everlasting, and even eternal, which have a beginning, though they have no end: and this is what the schools call æviternity, as distinct from eternity: thus angels, and the souls of men, being creatures of God, have a beginning; though, being immaterial and immortal, shall never die. The happiness of the saints is called eternal glory, "an eternal weight of glory; eternal life; an eternal inheritance; an house eternal in the heavens," 1 Pet. v. 10. Tit. i. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 17. and v. 1. Heb. ix. 15. And the misery of the wicked is signified by suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, by everlasting fire, and everlasting punishment, Jude 7. Matt. xxv. 41, 46. yet these have a beginning, though they will have no end; and so are improperly called eternal.

Eternity, properly so called, is that which is without beginning and end[n], and is without succession, or does not proceed in a succession of moments one after another; and is opposed to time, which has a beginning, goes on in a succession, and has an end: it is the measure of a creature's duration, and began when creature's began to be, and not before; and is proper to them, and not eternity, which only belongs to God. Thales being asked what God was, answered thus, what has neither beginning nor end[o], which is eternity. A Jewish writer[p] defines it, "in which there is no former nor latter; nor order, nor succession of times; it being without motion." And which Boetius[q] expressed in a few words, "Eternity is the interminable or unbounded and perfect possession of life whole together." And is thus described, *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God*, Psal. xc. 2.

Eternity, in this sense, is peculiar to God; as he only hath immortality, so he only has eternity; which must be understood not of the Father, or first person only, but of the Son and Spirit also; who are, with the Father, the one God; and possess the same undivided nature; of which, Eternity is an attribute. So the Son, though as to his human nature, was born in the fulness of time; yet, as to his divine nature, his goings forth were from of old, from everlasting: and as Mediator, in his office capacity, he was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, Mic. v. 2. Prov. viii. 23, 24. The Spirit of God was concerned in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and so must be before them; and which is the only idea we have of eternity, that it is before time and creatures were, Gen. i. 1, 2. Job xxvi. 13. Psal. xxxiii. 6. and, according to some, the Spirit is called, *the eternal Spirit*, Heb. ix. 14. Eternity is true of God, essentially considered, and in the sense explained, is to be proved; and that he is without beginning, without end, and without succession.

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[n] τα δ' αιδια, αγεννητα και αφθαρτα, Ariſtot. Ethic. l. 6. c. 3. [o] τι το θειον, το μητε αρχην εχον μητε τελευτην, Thales in Laert. l. 1. Vita Thalet. [p] R. Joſeph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 18. [q] Conſolat. Philoſoph. l. 5. p. 137.

I. That he is without beginning, or from everlasting: this is put by way of interrogation, Hab. i. 12. not as a matter of doubt, but of certainty, and is strongly affirmed, Psal. xciii. 2. and may be proved,

1. From his nature and being; as from his necessary self-existence: the existence of God is not arbitrary, but necessary: if arbitrary, it must be from his own will, or from the will of another; not from his own will, which would suppose him in being already; and then he must be before he existed, and must be, and not be, at the same instant; which are such contradictions as cannot be endured: not from the will of another, for then that other would be both prior and superior to him, and so be God, and not he: it remains, therefore, that he necessarily existed; and if so, then he must be eternal: since there was none before him; nor can any reason be given why he should necessarily exist at such an instant, and not before. His eternity may be argued from a state of non-existence he must have been in, if not eternal; and if so, then there was an instant in which he was not, and if there was an instant in which he was not, then there was an instant in which there was no God; and if so, there may be one again in which he may cease to be; for that which once was not, may again not be; and this will bring us into the depth of atheism; unless it could be supposed, which is quite irrational, that there was a God before him, and that there will be one after him; but this is strongly denied by himself; *Before me there was no God formed; neither shall there be after me*, Isai. xliii. 10. The eternity of God may be inferred from his immutability, which has been already established; these two go together, and prove each other, Psal. cii. 27. they are both to be observed in the great name of God, Jehovah, which signifies, he is, and was, and is to come, and takes in all time; but he is bounded by none, and is eternally the same; for if he is not eternal, he must have passed from non-existence into being; and what can be a greater change, than to come out of nothing into being? Moreover, God is the most perfect Being; which he would not be, if not eternal; for not to be, or to have a beginning, is an imperfection; and it is an humbling consideration to man, a creature of time, that he is but *of yesterday*, Job viii. 9. And if God was not eternal, let his beginning be when it may, in comparison of an eternity past, it would

be but as yesterday; which can never be admitted of. Add to this, that God is the first Cause of all things, and therefore must be eternal: all wise and thoughtful men acknowledge a first Cause; and in their reasoning rise from one cause to another, until they arrive to a first Cause, and there stop, and which they truly call God; for otherwise there would be no subordination of causes: if there was not a first Cause, there would not be a second, nor a third, &c. but all would be first, and all eternal; and if God is the first Cause, then he is without a cause, and therefore must be eternal; hence he is so often called the first and the last; a phrase expressive of his eternity, Isai. xli. 4. and xliv. 6. and xlviii. 12. He is the Creator of all things, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are; and therefore must be before all things, as every artificer is before his work made by him; and if before all creatures, then before time, which begins with them, and therefore from eternity, since we can conceive of nothing before time but eternity.

II. The Eternity of God may be proved from his attributes, several of which are said to be eternal, or from everlasting: the power of God is expressly called his eternal power; and is proved to be so by the works of creation, to which it must be prior, Rom. i. 20. The knowledge God has of all things is from eternity; though the things known are in time, his knowledge of them is before time; *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world,* απ' αιωνος from eternity, Acts xv. 18. The mercy of God is eternal, it is said to be, *from everlasting to everlasting*, Psal. ciii. 17. And so the love of God, which is no other than himself, for *God is love*, 1 John iv. 16. his love to his Son, " the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," was from everlasting; before the earth, the hills, and mountains were formed, then was he by him, " as one brought up with him," his darling and delight, Prov. viii. 30. our Lord himself says, his Father loved him before the foundation of the world, John xvii. 24. and as early did he love his elect in him; for he loved them as he loved him, v. 23. even with an everlasting love, a love which is both from everlasting, and to everlasting, Jer. xxxi. 3.

III. That God is Eternal may be argued from his purposes, counsels, and decrees; which are said to be of old, that is, from everlasting, Isai. xxv. 1. this is true of them in general; for no new purposes and resolutions rise up, or are framed by him in his mind; for then there would be something in him which was not before; which would imply mutability. Besides, they are expressly said to be eternal, Eph. iii. 11. and if they are eternal, then God, in whom they are, and by whom they are formed, must be eternal also. In particular, the purpose of God, according to election, or his choice of men to everlasting life, is eternal; not only was before men had done any good or evil, Rom. ix. 11. but they were chosen by him from the beginning, 2 Thess. ii. 13. not from the beginning of the gospel coming to them, nor of their faith and conversion by it; but from the beginning of time, and before time, even before the foundation of the world, as is in so many words expressed, Eph. i. 4. wherefore God, that chose them to salvation, must be eternal. Christ is eminently called the elect of God, being as Man and Mediator, chosen out from among the people, Isai. xlii. 1. Psal. lxxxix. 19. and the appointment of him, to be the Redeemer and Saviour of men, or the preordination of him to be the Lamb slain for the redemption of his people, was before the foundation of the world, 1 Pet. i. 20. and therefore God, that foreordained him thereunto, must be as early.

IV. The Eternity of God may be concluded from the covenant of grace, stiled, an everlasting covenant, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. not only because it will endure immoveable and unalterable for ever, but because it was from everlasting; for though it is sometimes called a new covenant, yet not because newly made, or only newly manifested; but because it is always new, and never waxes old. Christ, the Mediator of it, and with whom it was made, was set up from everlasting as such; and his goings forth in it, representing his people, and acting for them, were from of old, from everlasting, Prov. viii. 22, 23. Mic. v. 2. and he had a glory with God in it before the world began, John xvii. 5. there were blessings of goodness laid up in it, and with which Christ, the Mediator of it, was prevented; yea, the people of God were blessed with these spiritual blessings in Christ, as "they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and had grace given them in him before the world began," Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. Promises also were made as early to Christ, and to them in him, into whose hands they were put, and in whom they are, yea and amen; particularly, eternal life was promised by God, that cannot lie, before the world was, Tit. i. 2. Now if there was a covenant made by God from everlasting, and Christ was set up by him so early, as the Mediator of it; and there were blessings of grace, and promises of grace, made by him before time was, then he must be from everlasting.

V. It may be proved from the works of God in time: all creatures are the works of his hands; all beings have their being from him; and time beginning with them, he that made them must be before all time, and therefore eternal: this is the argument used to prove the eternity of Christ, the Word, that he was in the beginning, that is, from eternity with God; "because all things were made by him, and that he is the first-born of every creature, and before all things, because all things are created by him, and by him do all things consist," John i. 1—3. Col i. 15—17. and the same proves the eternity of God; for all things are from him, and so have a beginning; but he from whom they are, is from none, has no cause of his being, and therefore must be eternal. So creation is made a proof of his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20. creation proves his eternity, and his eternity proves his deity. Hence Thales said[r], "The most ancient of Beings is God."

II. That God is to everlasting, and without end, may be proved from his spirituality and simplicity, already established; what is mixed and compounded, and consists of parts, may be resolved into them again, and so be dissolved, as bodies may; but spirits, such as angels and the souls of men, being immaterial, are immortal, and continue for ever; and God being a spirit, an infinite and uncreated one, simple, and uncompounded of parts, must much more be so; and therefore is called, The incorruptible God, Rom. i. 23. It may be argued from his independency, he is self-existent; the first Cause, and without any cause; he is the only Potentate, "God over all, blessed for ever," and dependent on none; there is none above him, nor superior to him, that can put an end to his being; nor can it be thought, he being in such a state of infinite happiness, would ever put an end to it himself. His eternity is to be proved from his immutability; for those, as before observed, infer one another. God is immutable, and therefore without end; for what can be a greater change than for a being not to be? Hence God is opposed to creatures, to mortal men, whose flesh is as grass, the most changeable and perishing of any thing, and even to the heaven and the earth, they being such; but he is unchangeably the same; and so there is no end of his years, 1 Pet. ii. 24, 25. Psal. cii. 26, 27. This may be inferred from his dominion and government; he is, and sits King for ever; he is an everlasting King, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation, and will never end, Jer. x. 10. Psal. x. 16. and xxix. 10. Dan. iv. 3. and therefore he himself must be to everlasting. Moreover, he is not only called the living God, Jer. x. 10. but is often said to *live for ever and ever*, Rev. iv. 9, 10. and x. 6. Hence his purposes and decrees are never frustrated, because he ever lives to bring them into execution: men take up resolutions, and form schemes, which by reason of death, are never executed; their purposes are broken, and their thoughts perish; but " the counsel of the Lord stands for ever; and the thoughts of his heart to all generations," Psal. xxxiii. 11. and therefore he himself must endure for ever: his promises are all fulfilled; not only because he is able and faithful to perform, but because he continues for ever to make them good; and therefore is said to "keep truth for ever," Psal. cxlvi. 6. His covenant is firm and sure; more immoveable than rocks and mountains; it stands fast, with Christ, for ever, and God commands it for ever; because he ever lives to keep it. His love is to everlasting, as well as from it; he rests in it; nothing can seperate from it; and "with everlasting kindness he gathers his people, and has mercy on them;" and therefore must be for ever: his grace, mercy, and goodness, continually endure, and therefore he himself must; and "he will be the portion of his people for ever;" their everlasting ALL in ALL, and they shall reign and dwell with him for evermore. All which proves him to be without end.

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[r] πρεσβυτατον των οντων, θεος, αγεννητον γαρ, apud Laert. ut ſupra.

III. The Eternity of God, or his being from everlasting to everlasting, is without succession, or any distinctions of time succeeding one another, as moments, minutes, hours, days, months, and years: the reasons are, because he existed before such were in being; *Before the day was, I am he*, Isai. xliii. 13. before there was a day, before the first day of the creation, before there were any days, consisting of so many hours, and these of so many minutes; and if is eternity past, may it be so called, was without successive duration, or without succeeding moments, and other distinctions of time, why not his duration hrough time, and to all eternity, in the same manner? Should it be said, that ays and years are ascribed to God; it is true, they are; but it is in accomodaion and condescension to our weak minds, which are not capable of conceivng of duration, but as successive: and besides, those days and years ascribed o God, are expressly said not to be as ours, Job. x. v. he is, indeed, called, *The Ancient of days*, Dan. vii. 13. not ancient in days, or through them, as aged ersons are said to be in years, and well stricken in them; not so God: the neaning is, that he is more ancient than days; he was before all days, and his luration is not to be measured by them. And it may be observed, that the diferences and distinctions of time, are together ascribed to God, and not as succeeding one another; he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; these are all at once, and together with him; he is he *which is, and was, and is to come*, Heb. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 4. these meet together in his name Jehovah[s]; and so in his nature; he co-exists, with all the points of time, in time; but is unmoved and unaffected with any, as a rock in the rolling waves of the sea, or a tower in a torrent of gliding water; or as the gnomon or style of a sun-dial, which has all the hours of the day surrounding it, and the sun, by it casts a shade upon them, points at and distinguishes them, but the style stands firm and unmoved, and not affected thereby: hence it is that *one day is with the Lord as a thousand years; and a thousand years as one day*, 2 Pet. iii. 8. But if his duration was successive, or proceeded by succeeding moments, days, and years; one day would be but one day with him, and not a thousand; and a thousand days would answer to a thousand days, and not be as one only. Besides, if his duration was measured by a succession of moments, &c. then he would not be immense, immutable, and perfect, as he is: not immense, or unmeasurable, if to be measured by minutes, hours, days, months, and years; whereas, as he is not to be measured by space, so not by time: nor immutable; since he would be one minute what he was not before, even older, which cannot be said of God; for as a Jewish writer[t] well observes, it cannot be said of him, that he is older now than he was in the days of David, or when the world was created; for he is always, both before the world was made, and after it will cease to be; times make no change in him. Nor perfect; for if his duration was successive, there would be every moment something past and gone, lost, and irrecoverable; and something to come not yet arrived to and obtained; and in other respects he must be imperfect: the knowledge of God, proves him without successive duration. God knows all things, past, present, and to come, that is, which are so to us; not that they are so to him; these he knows at once, and all together, not one thing after another, as they successively come into being; all things are

[s] Plato observes, that to a temporal being we say of it, "it is, and was, and will be:" but to the eternal Being, "τῳ το εςι μονον; to him only it is," in Timæo, p. 1051. [t] Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, fol. 66. 1.

open and manifest to him at once and together, not only what are past and present, but he calls things that are not yet, as though they were; he sees and knows all in one view, in his all-comprehending mind: and as his knowledge is not successive, so not his duration. Moreover, in successive duration, there is an order of former and latter; there must be a beginning from whence every flux of time, every distinction proceeds; every moment and minute has a beginning, from whence it is reckoned, so every hour, day, month, and year: but as it is said of Christ, with respect to his divine nature, so it is true of God, essentially considered, that he has *neither beginning of days, nor end of life*, Heb. vii. 3. In short, God is Eternity itself, and inhabits eternity; so he did before time, and without succession; so he does throughout time; and so he will to all eternity. The very heathens[u] themselves had a notion of their supreme God, as eternal: and this is the definition Thales gave of God; for being asked, What is God? answered, What has neither beginning nor end; and therefore calls him, the most Ancient[w], Sallustius[x] denied that the nature of God was made, because it always was.

OF THE LIFE OF GOD.

HAVING considered the attributes of Simplicity, Immutability, Infinity, Omnipresence, and Eternity, which belong to God, as an uncreated, infinite, and eternal Spirit; and which distinguish him from all other spirits. I shall now proceed to consider such as belong to him as an active and operative Spirit, as all spirits are, more or less; but he is infinitely so, being *actus, purus, & simplicissimus*; he is all act; and activity supposes life and operations; power, such as God performs, almighty power, or omnipotence; which are the attributes next to be considered; and first his life. Some think this is not a single perfection of God, but expressive of all the divine perfections; and, indeed, it is his nature and essence, it is himself; and so is every other attribute his nature, under different considerations, and as variously displayed; wherefore this may be treated of as a distinct attribute; and a very eminent and fundamental one it is; by which God exerts his nature and essence, and displays all his perfections.

And in order to apprehend somewhat of the life of God, for comprehend it we cannot, it may be necessary to consider life in the creatures, what that is; and by rising from the lowest degree of life, to an higher, and from that to an higher still, we may form some idea of the life of God, though an inadequate one. Life is a principle in the creature by which it moves itself; what has motion has life, and what has not is without it; as long as a creature has any motion, it is supposed to have life; but when motionless, it is thought to be dead;

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[u] O pater, O hominum, ivumque æterna potestas, Virgil. Æneid. l. 10. v. 17. Alii Dii aliquando Dii non fuerant, sed Jupiter ab æterno fuit Deus, Pompon. Sabin. in ibid. διηκων εξ αιωνος ατερμονος εις ετερον αιωνα, Aristot. de Mundo, c. 7. [w] Laert. Vita Thalet. l. 1. p. 23, 24. Plutarch. Sept. Sap. Conviv. vol. 2. p. 153. [x] De Diis, c. 2.

the phrases, to move, and to have life, are synonymous, and express the same thing; see Gen. vii, 21—23. but it is not any kind of motion that can lay a claim to life; the sun, moon, and planets move, yet they are inanimate; so a dead carcass may be moved, though it cannot move; it is self-motion only that shews a creature to be alive, that is under a divine agency; for all creatures live and move and have their being in and of God; and hence it is that such who only seem to have self-motion, are, in an improper sense, said to live; as a fountain, flowing with water, is called living, Gen. xxvi. 19. to which the allusion is in Cant. iv. 15. Jer. ii. 13. John iv. 10. and water that is stagnated in pools and lakes, and remains unmoved, is dead. The lowest degree of real life is in vegetables, in herbs, plants, and trees; which are truly said to live, Ezek. xlvii. 7, 9. for though they have not a local motion, yet a motion of growth and increase; they become bigger and larger, and rise up to a greater height, and put forth leaves and fruit; which shews life. In animals there is an higher degree of life; in them there is the breath of life, which is common with the bodies of men, who live the same animal life with them; these are possessed of sensitive powers, of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling; and perform the common functions of life, eating, drinking, walking, &c. But neither of these sorts of life can assist us in our ideas of the life of God; there being nothing in theirs similar to his. There is an higher degree of life still, which is in rational creatures, angels, and the souls of men; by which they are capable not only of operating on bodies, on matter, without them, but of performing acts within themselves, by a self-motion, suitable to their nature, as spirits, and rational ones; such as to understand, to will, to choose, and refuse; love, and hate, &c. which may be called the motions of the mind; as the first thoughts of, and inclinations to sin, are called, motions, Rom. vii. 5. And now these internal acts of the mind, which are good in angels or men, and shew a rational life in them, most resemble what is in God; who can, in, and of, and by himself, understand all things, will and decree whatever he pleases; and loves and hates what is agreeable or disagreeable to him, &c. But what comes nearest to the life of God, that we can conceive of, is that which is in regenerated persons, who have a principle of spiritual life, grace, and holiness, implanted in them, by the Spirit of God, and are made partakers of the divine nature, Christ formed in them; "and they live, yet not they, but Christ lives in them;" and by having such a principle of life wrought in them, they understand divine and spiritual things; they will that which is spiritually good, and do what is such; the Spirit of God working in them a disposition thereunto, and giving them power to perform; "being in Christ, and created in him unto good works," they perform vital spiritual acts, and live a life, a spiritual holy life, and which is called, the life of God, unconverted men are strangers to, Eph. iv. 18. Now this most resembles the life of God, especially, as it will be perfect and eternal in a future state, though it comes abundantly short of what is in God; every imperfection in the life of angels and men, carried to its greatest height, must be removed from God; and every thing that is great and excellent, must be ascribed to him; and as infinitely transcending what is in finite creatures. God is life essentially, life eternally, and life efficiently.

I. God is life essentially, it is his nature and essence, it is himself, it is in and of himself, The natural life of creatures is not in and of themselves; but is in God, and from him: the spiritual and eternal life of the saints is not in and of themselves; but is from God, " hid with Christ in God." But the life of God is in and of himself; *The Father has life in himself*, John v. 26. and so has the Son and Word of God, John i. 1, 4. and likewise the Spirit, called, therefore, *the Spirit of life*, Rev. xi. 11. and what is true of all the Persons in the Godhead, they partaking of the same undivided nature and essence, and living the same life, is true of God, essentially considered. And as the life of God is of himself, it is independent; there is no cause from whence it is, or on which it depends. The natural and spiritual life of men is of God, depends on him; they live not so much their own life as another's; they have their life from God in every sense, and are supported in it by him; *he is thy life, and the length of thy days*, Deut. xxx. 20. But God lives his own life; which as it is without a cause, has no dependence on any other. It does not arise from any composition of parts, and the union of them, as the life, even the natural life, of man does, who consists of soul and body, and his life is the result of the union of these, which, when dissolved, it ceases; for the body without, or separate from, the spirit, or soul, is dead, James ii. 26. And the spiritual life of saints arises from the union of Christ and his Spirit, as a principle of life unto them; which, could it be dissolved, as it cannot, death would ensue, even death spiritual and eternal: but God is a Spirit, a simple and uncompounded Being; consists not of parts, from the union of which his life arises; and so his life is infinite, eternal, and immutable, as also most perfect. In the life of creatures, even in the highest degree, being finite and dependent, there is always something wanting; but in God there is none; he is El-Shaddai, God all sufficient, blessed and happy in himself for evermore.

The scriptures frequently speak of God as the living God, both in the Old and New Testament, Deut. v. 26. Josh. iii. 10. Psal. xlii. 2. and lxxxiv. 2. Matt. xvi. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. who has life in himself, and gives life to all that have it; and not the Father only, but the Son of God also, is called the living God, Heb. iii. 12. and the Spirit is called the Spirit of the living God, 2 Cor. iii. 3. each person is the living God, and God, essentially considered, is so; and this title and epithet he has in opposition to, and contradistinction from them that are not by nature God: the living God is opposed to idols, lifeless and motionless, Jer. x. 10—16. Acts xiv. 15. 1 Thess. i. 9. he is distinguished by this essential attribute of his from the first objects of idolatrous worship, the sun, moon, and stars, which are inanimate; from heroes, kings, and emperors, deified after their death; which idolatry was very early; and worshipping them is called eating the sacrifices of the dead, Psal. cvi. 28. and from all images of wood, stone, brass, silver, and gold, which are dumb idols, and lifeless ones; see Psal. cxv. 4—7. And God is not only acknowledged to be the living God, and to live for ever and ever, by some of the greatest personages, and proudest monarchs that ever were upon earth, and even had set up themselves for God, Dan. iv. 34. and vi. 26. but he asserts it of himself, which must be true, and may be depended on; *And lift up my hand, and say, I live for ever*, Deut. xxxii. 40. yea, it is an oath of his affirming the same, and it is the common form of swearing with him, *As I live, saith the Lord*; and which is very frequently used by him, see Numb. xiv. 28. and this is no other than swearing by his life, which is himself; "for when he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself," Heb. vi. 13. and so both men and angels swear by the living God; "by him that lives for ever and ever," Jer. v. 2. and xii. 16. Dan. xii. 7. Rev. x. 5, 6. which distinguishes him from, and prefers him to all other beings: and, indeed, he is most properly said to live; the life of creatures is no life in comparison of his; especially the life of man: what is it? "it is but a vapour, that appears for awhile, and then vanishes away," James iv. 14. But,

II. God is life eternally, without beginning, succession or end; he is without beginning of life or end of days, and without any variableness; "the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; he that is the true God, is also eternal life, 1 John v. 20. It is indeed said of Christ, the Word and Son of God, that he is the eternal life, which was with the Father from eternity, before manifested unto men; and so lives from eternity to eternity; and, as before observed, what is true of God personally, is true of him essentially considered; he lived from eternity, and will live for ever and ever; as several of the above scripture-testimonies assure us; and which may be concluded from the simplicity of his nature: what consists of parts may be resolved into those parts again, and so cease to be; but God is a simple and uncompounded Being, as has been established: not consisting of parts, and so not capable of being reduced to them, or being dissolved, and therefore must live for ever: and from his independency; he has no cause prior to him, from whom he has received his life, or on whom it depends, there is none above him, superior to him, that can take away his life from him, as he can from his creatures, who are below him, and dependent on him; but he is above all, and dependent on none. Likewise from his immutability; there is no change, nor shadow of change, in him; and yet, if his life was not eternal, he must be subject to the greatest of changes, death; but *he is the same and of his years there is no end*, Psal. cii. 27. The same arguments which prove his eternity, must prove also that he lives for ever; he *is the true God, the living God, and an everlasting King*, Jer. x. 10. he is called immortal, eternal, 1 Tim. i. 17. the very heathens have such a notion of Deity as immortal; nothing is more common with them than to call their gods, the immortal ones. God, says Socrates[y], is, I think, the very species or idea of life, and if any thing else is immortal, and confessed by all that he cannot perish. Aristotle[a], has this remarkable observation, "The energy, act, or operation of God, is immortality, this is everlasting life; wherefore there must needs be perpetual motion in God." And he reports[b], that Alcmæon supposed that the soul was immortal, because it was like to the immortals. But our God, the true God, is he who only hath immortality, 1 Tim. vi. 16. that is, who hath it in and of himself, and gives it to others. Angels are immortal, they die not; but then this immortality is not of themselves, but of God, who supports and continues them in their being; for as he made them out of nothing, he could, if he would, annihilate them, and bring them to nothing again: the souls of men are immortal; they cannot be killed, nor do they die with their bodies; but then what has been said of angels may be said of them. The bodies of men, after the resurrection, are immortal; this mortal then puts on immortality, and always is clothed with it, and ever continues; but this is the gift of God, and the effect of his will and power; yea, even the bodies of the wicked are immortal, but not of themselves. it is even against their wills; they choose and seek death, but cannot have it; their torments are endless, and the smoke of them ascends for ever and ever. God only has immortality in and of himself.

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[y] Apud Platon. in Phoedo. p. 79.

III. God is life efficiently, the source and spring, the author and giver of life to others; *With thee is the fountain of life*, Psal. xxxvi. 9. which he would not be, if he had not life in and of himself, essentially, originally, independently, most properly, and in the most perfect manner.

God is the author and giver of life, from the lowest to the highest degree of it. The vegetative life, that is in herbs, plants, and trees, is from him, and supported by him; and he takes it away, when his spirit blows upon them, Gen. i. 11, 12. Isai. xl. 7. The animal life is owing to him; the life of all animals, of the fishes in the sea, the fowl of the air, and the beasts of the field; and he gives them life and breath; and when he takes it away, they die, and return to the dust, Gen. i. 20—25. Acts xvii. 25. Psal. civ. 29. The rational life in angels and men, is from him; angels are made rational living spirits by him, and in him they consist: to men he grants life and favour, and his visitation preserves their spirit, and he is the God of their life, that gives it, and continues it, and takes it away at pleasure, Psal. xlii. 8. No creature can give real life; men may paint to the life, as we say, but they cannot give life: no man can make a living fly; he may as soon make a world.

The spiritual life that is in any of the sons of men, is from God. Men, in a state of unregeneracy, are dead, dead in a moral and spiritual sense; and whilst they are corporally alive, they are dead in trespasses and sins; and because of them dead as to them understanding of, will to, affection for what is morally and spiritually good; and their very living in sin is no other than death: nor can they quicken themselves; nothing can give what it has not; the resurrection of the dead, in a corporal sense, requires almighty power; and, in a

[a] De Cœlo. l. 2. c. 3. [b] De Animâ, l. 1. c. 2.

spiritual sense, the exceeding greatness of God's power; so that it is not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit and Power of the living God. It is God, that of his rich mercy, and because of his great love, and by his almighty power, quickens men dead in sin, dead in law, and exposed unto eternal death; he speaks life unto them, when he calls them by his grace, breaths into the dry bones the breath of life, and they live spiritually; a life of justification, through the righteousness of Christ, which is the justification of life, or adjudges and intitles them to eternal life; and a life of faith on Christ, and of holiness from him; they live in newness of life, soberly, righteously, and godly; which life is preserved in them, it springs up to everlasting life; it is hid and secured with Christ in God, is a never-dying one, and shall issue in eternal life; in which all the three Persons in the Godhead are concerned, John v. 21—25. and xi. 25. Rom. viii. 2.

Eternal life, so often spoke of in scripture, as what the saints shall enjoy for evermore, is of God; it is what he has provided and prepared for them in his council and covenant; what they are fore-ordained unto in his purposes and decrees, and do most certainly enjoy; what he who cannot lie has promised to them before the world began, and which is his free gift, and flows from his free favour and good-will, through Christ, Acts xiii. 48. Tit. i. 2. Rom. vi. 23. and in which the Son and Spirit have a concern; Christ came that his people might have it, and he gave his flesh for the life of them; it is put into his hands, and he has a power to dispose of it, and give it to his sheep; so that none of them shall perish, but have it, 1 John v. 12. John xvii. 2. and x. 28. And the Spirit, whose grace springs up to it, and issues in it; and he dwells in his people, as the earnest of it; and works them up for it, and brings them into the full enjoyment of it. Now God must have life in the highest degree of it, as explained; even essentially, originally, infinitely, and perfectly; or he could never give life in every sense unto his creatures; and he must live for ever, to continue eternal life, particularly to his people, and preserve them in it.

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OF THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

Some of the names of God, in the Hebrew language, are thought to be derived from words which signify firmness and stability, strength, and power; as Adonai, El, El-Shaddai, which latter is always rendered almighty, Gen. xvii. 1. Exod. vi. 3. and very frequently in the book of Job; and the Greek word παντοκρατωρ is used of God in the New Testament, and is translated almighty and omnipotent, Rev. i. 8. and iv. 8. and xix. 6. and power is one of the names of God, Matt. xxvi. 64. compared with Heb. i. 3. the angel said to the virgin Mary, *With God nothing shall be impossible*, Luke i. 37. and Epicharmus, the heathen, has the same expression[b]; and so Linus[c]: Omnipotence is essential to

[b] Stromat. l. 5. p. [illegible]

[c] [illegible], Linus.

God, it is his nature; a weak Deity is an absurdity to the human mind: the very heathens suppose their gods to be omnipotent, though without reason; but we have reason sufficient to believe that the Lord our God, who is the true God, is Almighty; his operations abundantly prove it; though if he had never exerted his almighty power, nor declared it by any external visible works, it would have been the same in himself; for it being his nature and essence, was from eternity, before any such works were wrought, and will be when they shall be no more; and hence it is called, his eternal power, Rom. i. 20. and may be concluded from his being an uncreated eternal Spirit. All spirits are powerful, as their operations shew; we learn some-what of their power from our own spirits or souls, which are endowed with the power and faculties of understanding, willing, reasoning, choosing and refusing, loving and hating, &c. and not only so, but are able to operate upon the body; and to quicken, move, direct and guide it to do whatever they please, and that that is capable of; and angelic spirits are more powerful still, they excel in strength, and are called mighty angels, Psal. ciii. 20. 2 Thess. i. 7. and have done very strange and surprizing things; one of them slew in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand men, in the Assyrian camp, 2 Kings xix. 35. and what then cannot God, the uncreated and infinite Spirit, do; who has endowed these with all their power, might, and strength? can less than omnipotence be ascribed to him? This may be inferred from his infinity. God is an infinite Being, and so is every perfection of his; his understanding is infinite, and such is his power; for, as a Jewish writer[d] argues, since power is attributed to God, it must be understood that it is infinite; for if it was finite, it might be conceived that there was a greater power than his; and so privation would fall on God; as if there was not in him the greater power that is to be conceived of. He is unlimited and unbounded, as to space, and so is omnipresent; and he is unlimited and unbounded as to time, and so is eternal; and he is unlimited and unbounded as to power, and so is omnipotent: to deny, or to call in question, his omnipotence, is to limit the holy one of Israel, which ought not to be done; this the Israelites are charged with, for distrusting his power to provide for them in the wilderness, Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20, 41. The omnipotence of God may be argued from his independency; all creatures depend on him, but he depends on none; there is no cause prior to him, nor any superior to him, or above him, that can controul him; none, who, if his hand is stretched out, can turn it back, or stop it from proceeding to do what he will; none can stay his hand, or say unto him what dost thou? "he does what he pleases in heaven and in earth," Dan. iv. 35. Moreover, this attribute of God may be confirmed by his perfection; God is a most perfect being; but that he would not be if any thing was wanting in him: want of power in a creature is an imperfection, and would be so in God, was that his case; but as he is great, his power is great; there is an exuberancy, an exceeding greatness of power in him, beyond all conception and expression; he

[d] Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, fol. 68. 2.

s "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think," Eph. i. 19. and iii. 20. And this may be strengthened yet more by observing, he uselessness of many other perfections without it; for what though he knows ll things fit and proper to be done, for his own glory, and the good of his creatures, what does it signify, if he cannot do them? and though he may, in the most sovereign manner, will, determine, and decree, such and such things to be done; of what avail is it if he cannot carry his will, determinations, and decrees into execution? what dependence can there be upon his faithfulness in his promises, if he is not able also to perform? and of what use is his goodness, or an inclination and disposition in him to do good, if he cannot do it? or where is his justice in rendering to every man according to his works, if he cannot execute it? So that, upon the whole, it is a most certain truth, that power belongs to God, as the Psalmist says, Psal. lxii. 11. and to whom he ascribes it, even power and might, by which two words he expresses the greatness of power, superlative power, power in the highest degree, even omnipotence, 1 Chron. xxix. 12. and it may be observed, that in all the doxologies or ascriptions of glory to God, by angels and men, power or might is put into them, Rev. iv. 10, 11. and v. 13. and vii. 11, 12. And indeed it belongs to no other; it is peculiar to God: nor is it communicable to a creature; since that creature would then be God; for omnipotence is his nature; nor is it even communicable to the human nature of Christ, for the same reason; for though the human nature is united to a divine person, who is omnipotent, it does not become omnipotent thereby; though the two natures, divine and human, are closely united in Christ; yet the properties of each are distinct and peculiar; and it is easy to observe, that the human nature of Christ was subject to various infirmities, though sinless ones, and stood in need of help, strength, and deliverance; for which, as man, he prayed; and at last he was crucified, through weakness, Heb. iv. 15. Psal. xxii. 19, 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 4. And as for Matt. xxviii. 18. that is said not of the attribute of divine power, which is not given him, but is natural to him, as a divine person but of his authority over all, and their subjection to him as Mediator.

The power of God reaches to all things, and therefore is, with propriety, called Omnipotence; all things are possible with God, and nothing impossible; this is said by an angel, and confirmed by Christ, Luke i. 37. Mark xiv. 36. what is impossible with men is possible with God; what cannot be done according to the nature of things, the laws, rules, and course of nature, may be done by the God of nature, who is above these, and not bound by them, and sometimes acts contrary to them; as when he stopped the sun in its course, in the times of Joshua; made iron to swim by the hands of the prophet Elisha; and suffered not fire to burn in the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, so that the three persons cast into it were not hurt by it, nor their clothes so much as singed, nor the smell of fire upon them: whereas, it is the nature of the sun to go on in its course, without stopping, nor can any creature stop it; and for ponderous bodies, as iron, to sink in water; and for fire to burn. There are some things, indeed, which God cannot do, and which the scriptures express, as, that *he cannot deny himself*, 2 Tim. ii. 13. nor do any thing that is contrary to his being, his honour and glory, or subversive of it; thus for instance, he cannot make another God, that would be contrary to himself, to the unity of his Being, and the declaration of his word; *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*, Deut. vi. 4. he cannot make a finite creature infinite; that would be to do the same, and there would be more infinites than one, which is a contradiction; he cannot raise a creature to such dignity as to have divine perfections ascribed to it, it has not, which would be a falshood; or to have religious worship and adoration given it, which would be denying himself, detracting from his own glory, and giving it to another, when he only is to be served and worshipped: in such manner it is also said of him, and he cannot lie, Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18. for this would be contrary to his truth and faithfulness; he can do nothing that is contrary to his attributes; he cannot commit iniquity, he neither will nor can do it; for that would be contrary to his holiness and righteousness; see Job xxxiv. 10, 12. and xxxvi. 23. he cannot do any thing that implies a contradiction; he cannot make contradictions true; a thing to be, and not to be at the same time; or make a thing not to have been that has been[e]; he can make a thing not to be, which is, or has been, he can destroy his own works; but not make that not to have existed, which has existed; nor make an human body to be every where; nor accidents to subsist without subjects; with many other things which imply a manifest contradiction and falshood: but then these are no prejudices to his omnipotence, nor proofs of weakness; they arise only out of the abundance and fulness of his power; who can neither do a weak thing nor a wicked thing, nor commit any falshood; to do, or attempt to do, any such things, would be proofs of impotence, and not of omnipotence.

The power of God may be considered as absolute, and as actual or ordinate. According to his absolute power, he can do all things which are not contrary to his nature and perfections, and which does not imply a contradiction; even though he has not done them nor never will: thus he could have raised up children to Abraham, out of stones, though he would not; and have sent twelve legions of angels to deliver Christ out of the hands of his enemies; but did not, Matt. iii. 9. and xxvi. 53. he that has made one world, and how many more we know not for certainty, Heb. xi. 3. could have made ten thousand; he that has made the stars in the heaven innumerable, could have vastly increased their number; and he that has made an innumerable company of angels, and men on earth, as the sand of the sea, could have added to them infinitely more. The power of God has never been exerted to its uttermost; it is sufficient to entitle him to omnipotence, that he has done, and does, whatsoever he pleases, and that whatsoever is made, is made by him, and nothing without him; which is what may be called, his ordinate and actual power; or what he has willed and determined, is actually done; and of this there is abundant proof, as will appear by the following instances.

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[e] So Agathon apud Aristot. Ethic. l. 6. c. 2.

1. In creation; the heaven, earth, and sea, and all that in them are, were created by God, is certain; and these visible works of creation, are proofs of the invisible attributes of God, and particularly, of his *eternal power*, Acts iv. 24. Rom. i. 20. Creation is making something out of nothing; which none but omnipotence can effect; see Heb. xi. 3. no artificer, though ever so expert, can work without materials, whether he works in gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, stone, or in any thing else: the potter can cast his clay into what form and figure he pleases, according to his art, and make one vessel for one use, and another for another; but he cannot make the least portion of clay: but God created the first matter out of which all things are made; and which were made out of things not before existing by the omnipotent Being; whom the good woman animating her son to martyrdom, exhorted to acknowledge, 2 Maccab. vii. 28. Nor can any artificer work without tools; and the more curious his work, the more curious must his tools be; but God can work without instruments, as he did in creation; it was only by his all-commanding word that every thing sprung into being, Gen. i. 3. &c. Psal. xxxvi. 9. and every thing created was was done at once; creation is an instantaneous act, is without succession, and requires no length of time to do it in; every thing on the several days of creation were done immediately: On the first day God said, "Let there be light;" and it immediately sprung out of darkness: on the second day he said, "Let there be a firmament," an expanse; and at once the airy heaven was stretched out like a curtain around our earth: on the third day he said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs, and fruit-trees;" and they arose directly out of it, in all their verdure and fruitfulness: on the fourth day he said, "Let there be lights in the heavens;" and no sooner was it said, but the sun, moon, and stars, blazed forth in all their lustre and splendor: on the fifth and sixth days orders were given for the waters to bring forth fish, and foul, and beasts, and cattle of every kind; and they accordingly brought them forth in full perfection immediately; and last of all, man was at once made, compleat and perfect, out of the dust of the earth, and the breath of life was breathed into him; and though there were six days appointed, one for each of these works, yet they were instantaneously performed on those days; and this time was allotted not on account of God, who could have done them all in a moment; but for the sake of men, who, when they read the history of the creation, there is a stop and pause at each work, that they may stand still and meditate upon it, and wonder at it. Whereas the works of men require time; and those that are most curious, longer still. Add to all this, that the works of creation were done without weariness; no labour of men is free from it: if it be the work of the brain, the fruit of close reasoning, reading, meditation, and study; much study, the wise man says, *is a weariness of the flesh*, Eccles. xii. 12. or if it be manual operation, it is labour and

fatigue; but the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, though he has wrought such stupendous works, *fainteth not, neither is weary*, Isai. xl. 28. and though he is said to rest on the seventh day, yet not on account of fatigue; but to denote he had finished his work, brought it to perfection, and ceased from it. And now, to what can all this be ascribed but to omnipotence? Which,

II. Appears in the sustentation and support of all creatures, in the provision made for them, with other wonderful works done in providence: all creatures live, move, and have their being in God; as they are made by him, they consist by him; "he upholds all things by the word of his power;" the heavens, the earth, and the pillars thereof, Acts xvii. 28. Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 3. Psal. lxxv. 3. which none but an almighty arm can do: and the manner in which the world, and all things in it, are preserved, and continue, is amazing and surprizing, and cannot be accounted for, no other way than by the attribute of omnipotence; for *he stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing; he bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under him*; though these are no other than condensed air, which carry such burdens in them, and yet are not burst by them—he has *shut up the sea with doors*; with clifts and rocks, and even with so weak a thing as sand; *and said, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid*—and has *caused the day-spring to know its place—divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters, and a way for the lightening of thunder, to cause it to rain on the earth*; which none of the vanities of the Gentiles can do; he gives that *and fruitful seasons filling* men's *hearts with food and gladness*, and provides for all the fowls of the air, and "the cattle on a thousand hills;" see Job xxvi. 7, 8. and xxxviii. 10—26. Acts xiv. 17. But what hand can do all these but an almighty one? To which may be added, those wonderful events in providence, which can only be accounted for by recurring to omnipotence, and to supernatural power and aid; as the drowning of the whole world; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain; the strange exploits of some particular persons, as Jonathan and David; the amazing victories obtained by a few over a multitude, sometimes by unarmed men, sometimes without fighting, and always by him that helps, whether with many, or with them that have no power, as the cases of Gideon, Jehoshaphat, and Asa shew; with various other things too numerous to mention, as the removing of mountains, shaking the earth, and the pillars of it, commanding the sun not to rise, and sealing up the stars, Job ix. 5, &c.

III. The omnipotence of God may be seen in the redemption of men by Christ, in things leading to it, and in the completion of it: in the incarnation of Christ, and his birth of a virgin, which the angel ascribes to the power of the Highest, the most high God, with whom nothing is impossible, Luke i. 35, 37. and which was an expedient found out by infinite wisdom, to remove a difficulty which none but omnipotence could surmount, namely, to bring a clean thing out of an unclean; for it was necessary that the Saviour of men should be man, that the salvation should be wrought out in human nature, that so men might have the benefit of it; and it was necessary that he should be free from sin, who became a sacrifice for it; yet how it could be, since all human nature was defiled with sin, was the difficulty; which was got over, through omnipotence forming the human nature of Christ in the above manner: and which was also evident in the protection of him from the womb; in his infancy, from the malice of Herod; after his baptism, from the violence of Satan's temptations, who put him upon destroying himself; and from the wild beasts of the wilderness; and from all the snares and attempts of the Scribes and Pharisees, to take away his life before his time: and in the miraculous works wrought by him, which were proofs of his Messiahship; such as causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and cleansing lepers, and even raising the dead to life; and which were such instances of omnipotence, as caused in those that saw them amazement at the mighty power of God, Matt. xi. 5. Luke ix. 43. and more especially this might be seen in making Christ, the man of God's right hand, strong for himself; in strengthening him in his human nature to work out salvation, which neither men nor angels could have done, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice; in upholding him under the weight of sins and sufferings; in enabling him to bear the wrath of God, and the curses of a righteous law, and to grapple with all the powers of darkness, and to spoil them, and make a triumph over them; and in raising him from the dead for justification, without which salvation would not have been compleat; and in which the exceeding greatness of the divine power was exerted; and whereby Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power, Eph. i. 19. Rom. ix. 4.

IV. Almighty power may be discerned in the conversion of sinners; that is a creation, which is an act of omnipotence, as has been proved. Men, in conversion, are made new creatures; "created in Christ, and after the image of God;" have new hearts and spirits, clean and upright ones, created in them; new principles of grace and holiness formed in them; "are turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God; and are made willing in the day of God's power" upon them, to be saved by Christ, and serve him; to submit to his righteousness, and to part with their sins and sinful companions: all which are effects of the exceeding greatness of the power of God towards them and upon them: they are quickened when dead in sins, and raised by Christ, the resurrection and the life, from a death of sin to a life of grace; the Spirit of life enters into them, and these dry bones live; conversion is a resurrection, and that requires almighty power. And if we consider the means of it, generally speaking, "the foolishness of preaching," the gospel put into earthen vessels, for this end, that the excellency of the power of God may appear to be of God, and not of men; and when these means are effectual, they are the power of God unto salvation, 2 Cor. iv. 7. Rom. i. 16. And also the great opposition made to this work, through the enmity and lusts of men's hearts, the malice of

Satan, willing to keep possession; the snares of the world, and the influence of wicked companions; it cannot be thought to be any thing short of the omnipotent hand of God, that snatches men, as brands, out of the burning: and the same power that is put forth in the beginning of the work of grace, is requisite to the carrying of it on: the rise, progress, and finishing of it, are not by might and power of men, but by the mighty, efficacious, and all-powerful grace of God, 2 Thess. i. 11. Zech. iv. 6.

v. That the Lord God is omnipotent, may be evinced from the rise and progress of christianity, the success of the gospel, in the first times of it, and the continuance of it, notwithstanding the opposition of men and devils. The interest of Christ in the world rose from small beginnings; it was like the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth; and this by means of the preaching of the gospel; and that by such who, for the most part, were men illiterate, mean, and contemptible, the foolish things of this world; and who were opposed by Jewish Rabbins, and heathen philosophers, by monarchs, kings, and emperors, and by the whole world; yet these went forth, and Christ with them, conquering and to conquer, and were made to triumph in him over all their enemies every where, so that in a short time the universal monarchy of the earth, the whole Roman empire, became nominally christian; and the gospel has lived through all the persecutions of Rome pagan and papal, and still continues, notwithstanding the craft of false teachers, and the force of furious persecutors; and will remain and be the everlasting gospel; all which is owing to the mighty power of God.

vi. The final perseverance of every particular believer in grace and holiness, is a proof of the divine omnipotence; it is because he is great in power, that not one of them fails; otherwise their in-dwelling sins and corruptions would prevail over them; Satan's temptations be too powerful for them; and the snares of the world, the flatteries of it, would draw them aside; but they are kept by the power of God, the mighty power of God, as in a garrison, through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. i. 5.

vii. The almighty power of God will be displayed in the resurrection of the dead; which considered, it need not be thought incredible; though otherwise it might; for what but the all commanding voice of the almighty God can rouse the dead, and raise them to life, and bring them out of their graves; "some to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of damnation?" What else but his almighty power can gather all nations before him, and oblige them to stand at the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive their several sentences? And what but his vengeful arm of omnipotence, can execute the sentence on millions and millions of devils and wicked men, in all the height of wrath, rage, fury, and rebellion? see Phil. iii. 21. John v. 28, 29. Matt. xxv. 32—46. Rev. xx. 8—10.

OF THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

Having considered such attributes of God, which belong to him as an active and operative Spirit; as the Life of God, and his Power, or Omnipotence; I proceed to consider such perfections, which may be ascribed to him as an intelligent Spirit; to which, rational spirits, endowed with understanding, will, and affections, bear some similarity. God is said to have a mind and understanding, Rom. xi. 34. Isai. xl. 28. to which may be referred, the attributes of knowledge and wisdom, which go together, Rom. xi. 33. I shall begin with the first of these. And prove,

I. That knowledge belongs to God. This is objected to, and called in question, by impious and atheistical persons, Psal. lxxiii. 11. particularly with respect to human affairs; the grounds of which doubts about it, and objections to it, seem to arise, partly from the supposed distance of God in heaven, from men on earth, and partly from the thick and dark clouds which intervene between them, Job xxii. 12—14. and which are easily answered by observing the omnipresence of God, or his presence in all places; and that the darkness hides not any thing from his all-piercing, all-penetrating eye, the darkness and the light being alike to him, Psal. cxxxix. 7—12. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. Let it be further observed, that in all rational creatures there is knowledge; there is much in angels, and so there was in man, before the fall, both of natural, divine, and civil things; and since the fall there is a remainder of it, notwithstanding the loss sustained by it; and there is more, especially divine and spiritual knowledge, in regenerate men, who are renewed in knowledge. Now if there is knowledge in any of the creatures of God, then much more in God himself. Besides, all that knowledge that is in angels or men, comes from God; he is a God of knowledge, or knowledges, of all knowledge, 1 Sam. ii. 3. the source and fountain of it, and therefore it must be in him in its perfection: knowledge of all things, natural, civil, and spiritual, is from him, is taught and given by him; wherefore strong is the reasoning of the Psalmist, *He that teaches man knowledge, shall he not know?* Psal. xciv. 10. His knowledge may be inferred from his will, and the actings of it; that he has a will is most certain, and works all things after the counsel of his will, which cannot be resisted, Eph. i. 11. Rom. ix. 19. and this can never be supposed to be without knowledge; it is generally said and believed of the will of man, that it is determined by the last act of the understanding; and it cannot be imagined that God wills any thing ignorantly and rashly; he must know what he wills, and nills, and to whom he wills any thing, or refuses, Rom. ix. 15, 18. and it appears from all his works, from the works of creation, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all in them; which are ascribed to his wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, and could never be made without them, Prov. iii. 19, 20. the government of the world, and the judgment of the last day, suppose and require the same, Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Without knowledge God would not be perfectly happy; the blessed one, and blessed for ever, as he is. It is knowledge that gives men the preference to the brute creation, and makes them happier than they, Job xxxv. 11. and the spiritual knowledge which good men have, gives them a superior excellency and felicity to bad men; and their happiness in a future state will lie, as in perfect holiness, so in perfect knowledge, or to know, as they are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. In short, without knowledge, God would be no other than the idols of the Gentiles, who have eyes, but see not; are the work of errors, and are falshood and vanity; but the portion of Jacob is not like them, Jer. x. 14—16. I go on,

II. To shew the extent of the knowledge of God: it reaches to all things, John xxi. 17. 1 John iii. 20. and is therefore with great propriety called omniscience, and which the very heathens[f] ascribe to God; and extend it to thoughts. Thales[g] being asked, Whether a man doing ill, could lie hid to, or be concealed from God? answered, No, nor thinking neither. And Pindar[h] says, If any man hopes that any thing will be concealed from God, he is deceived.

1. God knows himself, his nature and perfections: somewhat of this is known by creatures themselves, even by the very heathens, through the light of nature, and in the glass of the creatures, wherein God has shewed it to them; even his invisible things, his eternal power and Godhead, Rom, i. 19, 20. and which are more clearly displayed in Christ, and redemption by him; and more evidently seen by those who are favoured with a divine revelation: and if creatures know something of God, though imperfectly, then he must know himself, in the most perfect manner: and rational creatures are endowed with knowledge of themselves, of their nature, and what belongs to them, as angels may reasonably be supposed to be; since even men, in their fallen and imperfect state, know something of themselves, of the constitution, temperament, and texture of their bodies, and of the powers and faculties of their souls; what is in them, in the inmost recesses of their minds, their thoughts, purposes, and intentions, 1 Cor. ii. 11. *Nosce te ipsum*, Know thyself, has been reckoned a wise maxim with philosophers, and the first step to wisdom and knowledge; and good men, illuminated by the Spirit of God, attain to the highest degree of it; and if creatures know themselves in any degree, infinitely much more must the Creator of all know himself. God knows himself in all his persons, and each person fully knows one another; the Father knows the Son, begotten by him, and brought up with him; the Son knows the Father, in whose bosom he lay; and the Spirit knows the Father and Son, whose Spirit he is, and from whom he proceeds; and the Father and Son know the Spirit, who is sent by them as the

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[f] παντα ιδων Διος οφθαλμος και παντα νοησας, Hesiod. Opera & Dies, l. 1. v. 263. [g] Apud Laert. Vita ejus, Val. Maxim. l. 7. c. 2. extern. 8. [h] Olymp. Ode 1. so Epicharmus apud Clement. Stromat. l. 5. p. 599.

Comforter; see Matt. xi. 27. 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. God knows the mode of each person's subsistence in the Deity, the paternity of the Father, the generation of the Son, and the spiration of the Holy Ghost; that these three are one, and one in three; three persons, but one God; which is a mystery incomprehensible by us; but inasmuch as God, who knows his own nature best, has so declared it to be, it becomes us to yield the obedience of faith unto it; he knows his own thoughts, which are the deep things of God, and as much above us as the heavens are above the earth, and as much out of our reach; but he knows them, Jer. xxix. 11. that is, his decrees, purposes and designs, as he needs must, since they are purposed in himself; he knows the things he has purposed, and the exact time of the accomplishment of them, which he has reserved in his own power, Eph. i. 11. Eccles. iii. 1. Acts i. 6.

II. God knows all his creatures, there is not any creature, not one excepted, *that is not manifest in his sight*, Heb. iv. 13. Known unto him are all his works; all that his hand has wrought, Acts xv. 18. when he had finished his works of creation, he saw every thing that he had made, looked over it and considered it, and pronounced it good, Gen. i. 31. and his eyes see all things in their present state and condition; he knows all things inanimate, all that is upon the earth, herbs, grass, trees, &c. and all in the bowels of it, metals and minerals; all that are in the heavens, not only the two great luminaries, the sun and moon, their nature, motion, rising and setting, with every thing belonging to them, but the stars innumerable; he bringeth out their host by number, or them as a mighty army, and numerous; and yet, as numerous as they are, he calleth them all by names; such a distinct and particular knowledge has he of them, and that because he hath created them; and he upholds them in being, by the greatness of his might, so that *not one faileth*, Isai. xl. 26. he knows all the irrational creatures, the beasts of the field, "the cattle on a thousand hills;" *I know*, says he, *all the fowls of the mountains*, Psal. l. 10, 11. as worthless a bird as the sparrow is, not one of them falls on the ground, without the knowledge and will of God, Matt. x. 30. he knows all the fishes of the sea, and provided one to swallow Jonah, when thrown into it; and which, at his order, cast him on dry land again, Jonah i. 17. and ii. 10. And if Adam had such knowledge of all creatures, as to give them proper and suitable names, Gen. ii. 19, 20. and Solomon, a fallen son of his, could *speak of trees, from the cedar in* Lebanon, *to the hyssop that springs out of the wall*; and *of beasts, fowl, creeping things, and fishes*, 1 Kings iv. 33. even of their nature, properties, use, and end; can it be thought incredible that God, the Creator of them, should have a distinct and perfect knowledge of all these? he knows all rational beings, as angels and men; the angels, though innumerable, being his creatures, standing before him, beholding his face, and sent forth by him as ministring spirits; the elect angels, whom he must know, since he has chosen them and put them under Christ, the head of all principality and power; and confirmed them, by his grace, in their happy state; and who stand on his right hand and left, hearkening to his voice, and ready to obey his will; and are employed by him in providential affairs, and in things respecting the heirs of salvation. Yea, the apostate angels, devils, are known by him, and are laid up in chains of darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day, and are under the continual eye of God, and the restraints of his providence: the questions put to these by God, Job i. 7. and by Christ, Mark v. 9. do not imply any kind of ignorance of them; the one is put to lead on to a discourse concerning Job, and the other to shew the greatness of the miracle wrought in casting them out. God knows all men, good and bad, all the sons of men, the inhabitants of the earth, wherever they are, in all places and in all ages, Psal. xxxiii. 13, 14. Prov. xv. 2. he knows their hearts, for he has fashioned them alike, and is often said to be the searcher of them; he knows the thoughts of the heart; as his word, so is he a discerner of them, Heb. iv. 12. see Psal. cxxxix. 2. which is peculiar to God, and a strong proof of the Deity of Christ, the essential Word, Matt. ix. 4. John ii. 24, 25. Heb. iv. 12, 13. the evil thoughts of men, which are many and vain, Psal. xciv. 11. and the good thoughts of men, as he must, since they are of him, and not of themselves; and he takes such notice of them, as to write a book of remembrance of them, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Mal. iii. 16. he knows the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart, the first motions to thought, whether good or bad, Gen. vi. 5. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. he knows all the words of men, there is not one upon their tongues, or uttered by them, but he knows it altogether, Psal. cxxxix. 4. the words of wicked men, even every idle word, which must be accounted for in the day of judgment; and much more their blasphemies, oaths, and curses; and all their hard speeches spoken against Christ and his people, Matt. xii. 36. Jude 15. And the words of good men, expressed in prayer and thanksgiving, and spiritual conversation with one another, Mal. iii. 16. And all the works and ways of men, Job xxxiv. 21 their civil ones, their down-sitting and uprising, going forth and coming in, Psal. cxxxix. 2, 3. and cxxi. 3, 8. and all their sinful ways and works, which will all be brought into judgment, and for which an account must be given at the bar of God, Eccles. xii. 14. 2 Cor. v. 10. as well as all the good works of God's people, who knows from what principles they spring, in what manner they are done, and with what views, and for what ends, Rev. ii. 2, 19.

III. God knows all things whatever, as well as himself and the creatures: he knows all things possible to be done, though they are not, nor never will be done; such as have been observed under the preceding attribute; and this knowledge is what is called by the schoolmen, "Knowledge of simple intelligence" of things that are not actually done. He knows what might be, and in course, would be, should he not prevent them by the interposition of his power and providence, and which he determines to do: so he knew the wickedness and treachery of the men of Keilah to David, and that if he stayed there, they would deliver him up into the hands of Saul, and therefore gave him notice of it, that he might make his escape from them, and so prevent their giving him up, according to his determinate will, 1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12. God knows the wickedness of some men's hearts, that they would be guilty of the most shocking crimes, and that without number, if suffered to live, and therefore he takes them away by death; and that such is the temper of some, that if they had a large share of riches, they would be so haughty and overbearing, there would be no living by them; and that even some good men, if they had them, would be tempted to abuse them, to their own hurt, and therefore he gives them poverty. Moreover, God knows all things that have been, are, or shall be; and which the schools call, "knowledge of vision;" an intuitive view of all actual things; things past, present, and to come; so called, not with respect to God, with whom nothing is past nor future, but all present; but with respect to us, and our measures of time. He knows all former things, from the beginning of the world; and which is a proof of Deity, and such a proof that the idols of the Gentiles cannot give, nor any for them, Isai. xli. 22. and xliii. 9. all past transactions at the creation, the fall of Adam, and what followed on that; the original of nations and their settlements in the world; with various other occurrences to be met with only in the Bible, inspired by God; which, as it is the most ancient, so the truest and best history in the world: nothing that has been can escape the knowledge of God, nor slip out of his mind and memory; oblivion cannot be ascribed to him; could he forget past facts, or they be lost to him, how could every thing, open or secret, be brought into account, at the day of judgment, as it will? Eccles. xii. 14. Forgetting the sins of his people, and remembering them no more, are attributed to him after the manner of men; who, when they forgive one another, do, or should, forget offences. God sees and knows all things present; all are naked and open to him, he sees all in one view; all that is done every where; as he must, since he is present in all places; and all live, and move, and have their being in him. He knows all things future, all that will be, because he has determined they shall be; it is his will that gives futurition to them, and therefore he must certainly know what he wills shall be: and this is another proof of Deity wanting in heathen idols, Isai. xli. 22, 23. and xliv. 7. and xlvi. 10. And this is what is called Prescience or Fore-knowledge; and of which Tertullian[i], many hundreds of years ago, observed, that there were as many witnesses of it, as there are prophets; and I may add, as there are prohecies; for all prohecy is founded on God's fore-knowledge and predetermination of things; and of this there are numerous instances; as of the Israelites being in a strange land four hundred years, and then coming out with great substance, Gen. xv. 13, 14. of their seventy years captivity in Babylon, and deliverance from thence at the end of that time, Jer. xxix. 10. with many other things relating to that people, and other nations; the prophecies of Daniel, concerning the four monarchies; the predictions of the Old Testament, concerning the incarnation of Christ, his suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and session at God's right hand. And what is the book of the Revelation but a prophecy, and so a proof of God's fore-knowledge of future events, which should be in the church and world, from the times of Christ to the end of the world? and this prescience, or fore-knowledge of God, is not only of the effects of necessary causes, which necessarily will be, unless prevented by something extraordinary; and of which, men themselves may have knowledge; and that things ponderous will fall downwards, and light things move upwards; and that fire put to combustible matter, will burn; but of things contingent, which, as to their nature, may or may not be, and which even depend upon the wills of men; and which, with respect to second causes, are hap and chance. Indeed, with respect to God, there is nothing casual or contingent[k]; nothing comes to pass but what is decreed by him, what he has determined either to do himself, or by others, or suffer to be done, Lam. iii. 37, 38. that which is chance to others, is none to him; what more a chance-matter than a lot? yet though that is cast into the lap, and it is casual to men, how it will turn up, *the whole disposing of it is of the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 33. What more contingent than the imaginations, thoughts, and designs of men, what they will be? and yet these are foreknown before conceived in the mind, Deut. xxxi. 21. Psal. cxxxix. 2. or than the voluntary actions of men? yet these are foreknown and foretold by the Lord, long before they are done; as the names of persons given them, and what should be done by them; as of Josiah, that he should offer the priests, and burn the bones of men on the altar at Bethel, see 1 Kings xiii. 2. and 2 Kings xxiii. 15, 16. and of Cyrus, that he should give orders for the building of the temple, and city of Jerusalem; and let the captive Jews go free without price, Isai. xliv. 28. and xlv. 13. Ezra i. 1—3. all which were predicted of these persons by name, some hundreds of years before they were born: how all this is reconcileable with the liberty of man's will, is a difficulty; and therefore objected to the certain fore-knowledge and decree of God; but whether this difficulty can be removed, or no, the thing is not less certain: let it be observed, that God's decrees do not at all infringe the liberty of the will, nor do not put any thing in it, nor lay any force upon it; they only imply a necessity of the event, but not of a coaction, or force on the will; nor do men feel any such force upon them; they act as freely, and with the full consent of their will, whether good men or bad men, in what they do, as if there were no fore-knowledge and determination of them by God; good men willingly do what they do, under the influence of grace, though foreordained to it by the Lord, Eph. ii. 10. Phil. ii. 13. and so do wicked men; as Judas in betraying Christ, and the Jews in crucifying him; though both were "according to the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God," Luke xxii. 22. Acts ii. 23.

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[i] Adv. Marcion. l. 2. c. 5.

There is another sort of prescience, or fore-knowledge, the scriptures speak of; on which the election of persons to eternal life is founded, and according to which it is, Rom. viii. 30. 1 Pet. i. 2. which is not a fore-knowledge of faith, holiness, and good works, and perseverance therein, as causes of it; for these are effects and fruits of election, which flow from it; nor bare fore-knowledge of persons, but as joined with love and affections to the objects of it; and which is not general, but special; *The Lord knows them that are his,* 2 Tim. ii. 19. not in general, as he knows all men; but distinctly, and particularly, he loves them, approves of them, and delights in them, and takes a particular care of them; whilst of others he says, *I know you not,* Matt. vii. 23. that is, as his beloved and chosen ones. But as this belongs to the doctrine of predestination, I shall defer it to its proper place.

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[k] Mihi ne in Deum quidem cadere videatur, ut sciat quid casu & fortuito futurum sit; si enim scit certe, illud eveniet; sin certe eveniet, nulla fortuna est, Cicero de Divinatione, L. 2.

III. Though enough has been said to prove the omniscience of God, by the enumeration of the above things; yet this may receive further proof from the several attributes of God: as from his infinity; God is infinite; he is unlimited and unbounded as to space, and so omnipresent; he is unbounded as to time, and so eternal; and he is unbounded as to power, and so omnipotent; and he is unbounded as to knowledge, and so omniscient; there is no searching, no coming to the end of his understanding. From his eternity; he is from everlasting to everlasting, and therefore must know every thing that has been, is, or shall be. Men are but of yesterday, and therefore, comparatively, know nothing; *ars longa, vita brevis*; science is of a large extent, and man's life but short, and he can gain but little of it. Likewise from the omnipresence of God; he is every where, in heaven, earth, and hell; and therefore must know every creature, and every thing that is done there, Psal. cxxxix. 7—12. and it may be observed, that what is said there of this attribute, follows upon an account of the omniscience of God, and serves to confirm it: it may be argued from the perfection of God; if any thing was wanting in his knowledge, neither that, nor he himself, would be perfect. If the circuit of the sun is from one end of the heaven to the other, and nothing is hid on earth from its light and heat; and hence the heathens[1] represent it as seeing all things; then much more may it be said of God, who is a sun, that *he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven*; see Psal. xix. 6. Job xxviii. 24. From the several works of God his omniscience may be inferred; he has made all things, and therefore must perfectly know them; every artificer knows his own work, its nature, composition, parts, use, and end. God upholds all things, and is present with them, and therefore must have knowledge of them; he governs the world, orders, directs, and disposes of all things in it; provides for all his creatures; feeds them, and gives them their portion of meat in due season; and therefore must know them all: all the deeds of men, good and evil, public and private, will be all brought into judgment by him; which to do, requires omniscience; see Eccles. xii. 14. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Rev. ii. 23.

IV. The manner in which God knows all things, is incomprehensible by us; we can say but little of it, "such knowledge is too wonderful for us," Psal. cxxxix. 6. we can better say in what manner he does not know, than in what he does: he does not know things by revelation, by instruction, and communication from another; or any way by which men come at the knowledge of things from others; for *shall any teach God knowledge? or who has taught him?* Job xxi. 22. Isai. xl. 13, 14. all things were known to God from eternity, when there were none in being to inform him of any thing: besides, to suppose this, is not only contrary to his eternity, but to his independency; for this would make him beholden to, and dependent on another, for his knowledge; whereas "all things are of him, for him, and through him." Nor is his knowledge attained by reasoning, discoursing and inferring one thing from another, as man's is; who not only apprehends simple ideas, but joins and compounds them, and infers other things from them; but then this implies some degree of prior ignorance; or at best, imperfect knowledge, till the premises are clear, and the conclusion formed; which is not to be said of God: and this method of knowledge would be contrary to the simplicity of his nature, which admits of no composition, as well as to his perfection: nor does he know things by succession, one after another; for then it could not be said, that all things are naked and open to him; only some at one time, and some at another; which would also argue ignorance of some things, in one instant and another; and imperfection of knowledge; and would be contrary to his immutability, since every accession of knowledge would make an alteration in him; whereas with him there is no variableness; he sees and knows all things at once and together, in one eternal view. In a word, he knows all things in himself, in his own essence and nature; he knows all things possible in his power, and all that he wills to do in his will, and all creatures in himself, as the first cause of them; in whose vast and eternal mind are all the original ideas of them; so that the knowledge of God is essential to him, it is his nature and essence, and therefore is incommunicable to a creature, and even to the human nature of Christ; which, though united to a divine person that is omniscient, yet does not thereby become omniscient; and though the human soul of Christ may know more than the soul of any man, yet not every thing; see Mark xiii. 32. The knowledge of God is also infinite, Psal. cxlvii. 5. he knows himself, that is infinite; which he could not, unless his knowledge was infinite; for it is impossible, as a Jewish[m] writer observes, that he should know what is perfectly infinite, if his knowledge was not perfectly infinite; for what is finite, can never comprehend that which is infinite; and he knows all things *ad infinitum*; there is no searching of his knowledge; it is perfect, and nothing can be added to it, Job xxxvi. 4. and it is not conjectural, but certain, depending on his will; he knew from all eternity, most certainly, that all things would be, that are, because he determined they should be; and his will cannot be frustrated, nor his power resisted, Job xlii. 2.

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[1] Ἠέλιον, ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ, Homer. Odyss. 11. v. 108. & 12. v. 323. Vid. Sophoclis Trachin. v. 102.

[m] Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, fol. 60. 2.

OF THE WISDOM OF GOD.

THE next attribute of God, which requires our attention, is, the Wisdom of God, which belongs to him as an intelligent Spirit. This is a more comprehensive attribute than that of knowledge; for it not only supposes that, but directs and uses it, in the best manner, and to the best ends and purposes; as well as his power and goodness. I shall prove,

I. That wisdom is a perfection in God, and is in him in its utmost perfection; it is consummate and infinite wisdom he is possessed of. No one that believes the being of a God, can admit the least doubt of it. An unwise Being cannot be God. No man is wise, says Pythagoras[n], but God only. That with him is wisdom, is frequently asserted in the sacred scriptures, Job xii. 12, 13. Dan. ii. 20, 21. And, indeed, if this is, and is expected to be with ancient men, who have lived long, and have had a large experience of things; then much more, yea, infinitely more, may it be thought to be with him, who is the ancient of days, and from everlasting to everlasting God. He is no less than three times said to be *the only wise God*, Rom. xvi. 27. 1 Tim. i 17. Jude 25. Not to the exclusion of his Son, who is called wisdoms, plurally, because of the infinite fulness of wisdom that dwells in him, Prov. i. 20. nor of the Spirit, who is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him, Eph. i. 17. but with respect to creatures, who have no wisdom, in comparison of him; the angels, those knowing and wise beings, when compared with him, are chargeable with folly, Job iv. 18. and as for "man, though he would be wise, he is born like a wild ass's colt;" and has very little wisdom in things civil, none in things spiritual; and though he is wise to do evil, to do good he has no knowledge. God is all-wise; he has all wisdom in him; there is no defect of it in him; there is nothing of it wanting in him, with respect to any thing whatever. Men may be wise in some things, and not in others; but he is wise in every thing; *nemo sapit omnibus horis*; no man is wise at all times; the wisest of men sometimes say a foolish word, and do a foolish thing: but God, neither in his word, nor in any of his works, can be charged with folly; not an unwise saying appears in all the scriptures; nor an unwise action in any of his works; *How manifold are thy works, O Lord, in wisdom hast thou made them all!* Psal. civ. 24. God is essentially wise; there is the personal wisdom of God, which is Christ; who is often spoken of as wisdom, and as the wisdom of God; see Prov. viii. 12—31. 1 Cor. i. 24. and there is his essential wisdom, the attribute now under consideration; which is no other than the nature and essence of God; it is himself; as he is love itself, and goodness itself, so he is wisdom itself; his wisdom cannot be separated from his essence; this would be contrary to his simplicity, and he would not be that simple and uncompounded Spirit he has been proved to be. God is wisdom efficiently; he is the source and fountain of it, the God and giver of it; all that is in the angels of heaven comes from him; all that Adam had, or any of his sons; or was in Solomon, the wisest of men; or is in the politicians and philosophers of every age; or in every mechanic; or appears in every art and science; all is the gift of God; and particularly, the highest and best of wisdom, spiritual wisdom, wisdom in the hidden part, the fear of God in the soul of man, is what God puts there; wherefore, as he that teacheth man knowledge, must have knowledge himself; so he that gives wisdom to the wise, must have infinite wisdom himself; for such is the wisdom of God, it is unsearchable; there is no tracing it; it has a βαθος, a depth, which is unfathomable, Rom. xi. 33. see Job xi. 6—9. and xxviii. 12—23. yet, though it cannot be traced out to the full, or be found out to perfection, there are some shining appearances and striking instances of it; which clearly and plainly prove that wisdom, in its utmost extent, is with him. And which,

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[n] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. Procem. p. 8.

II. Will be next observed.

1. The wisdom of God appears in his purposes and decrees, and which are therefore called his counsels, Isai. xxv. 1. not that they are the effects of consultation with himself or others; but because such resolutions and determinations with men are generally the wisest, which are formed on close thought, on mature deliberation, and on consultation with themselves and others. Hence the decrees of God, which are at once fixed with the highest wisdom, are called counsels; though his counsels are without consultation, and his determinations without deliberation; of which he has no need. As he sees in his understanding, what is fittest to be done, his wisdom directs his will to determine, at once, what shall be done; and this is seen in appointing the end for which they are to be, in ordaining means suitable and conducive to that end, and in pitching upon the most proper time for execution; and in guarding against every thing that may hinder that. The end for which God has appointed all that has been, or shall be, is himself, his own glory, the best end that can be proposed; the Lord hath made, that is, appointed all things for himself; for the glorifying of himself, one or other of the perfections of his nature; for as all things are of him, as the efficient cause; and are through him, as the wise orderer and disposer of them; so they are to him, as the final cause, or last end of them, his own glory, Prov. xvi. 4. Rom. xi. 36. The means he fixes on to bring it about, are either extraordinary or ordinary; which latter are second causes depending upon him, the first Cause, and which are linked together, and under his direction and influence most certainly attain the end; see Hos. ii. 21, 22. and which is effected in the most seasonable time; for as there is a purpose for every thing done under the heavens, there is a time fixed for every purpose; and as the times and seasons are in the power of God, and at his disposal, he pitches upon that which is the most suitable; for he makes every thing beautiful in his time, Eccles. iii. 1, 11. Acts i. 7. and being the omniscient God, he foresees all

iture events, the end from the beginning; so that nothing unforeseen by him an occur to hinder the execution of his purposes; wherefore his counsel shall tand, and he will do all his pleasure, Isai. xlvi. 10. and though there may be any devices formed to counter-work his designs, they are all in vain; there is o wisdom nor counsel against the Lord; he disappoints the devices of the crafty, nd the counsel of the froward is carried headlong; so that his counsel always tands; and the thoughts of his heart, which are his decrees, are to all generaions. All this is true of the decrees of God in general. And if the princes of his world, under a divine direction, form wise counsels, and make wise and ighteous decrees; with what greater, with what consummate wisdom, must the ounsels and decrees of God himself be made; concerning which the apostle reaks forth into this exclamation, *O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom nd knowledge of God!* Rom. xi. 33. for he is there treating of the decrees of God, and particularly of the decrees of election; and in which the wisdom of God appears, both in the end and means, and in the persons he has chosen: is end is the praise of his own grace, or the glorifying of his sovereign grace nd mercy in the salvation of men, Rom. ix. 23. Eph. i. 5, 6. to shew the sovereignty of it, he passed this decree without any respect to the works of men, nd before either good or evil were done; and to shew that he is no respecter of persons, he chose some out of every nation, Jews and Gentiles; and to shew he freeness of his grace, he chose the foolish and weak things of this world, nd things that are not; that no flesh should glory in his presence: and as he chose those persons to be holy, and to bring them to a state of holiness and happiness, and in a way consistent with his justice; he has pitched upon means the wisest that could be devised, even "sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the ruth; the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," the righteousness and death of Christ, 2 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2. So that this decree stands firm and stable; not on the foot of men's works, but upon the will of God; the election always obtains, or its end is answered: those that are ordained to eternal life most surely believe; and they that are predestinated to it, are most certainly "called, justified and glorifyed," Acts xiii. 48. Rom. viii. 30. The subordinate end of election, is the salvation of the elect; that is what they are appointed to, 1 Thess. v. 9, the scheme and plan of which salvation is so wisely formed, that it is called the manifold wisdom of God, in which there are various displays of it, Eph. iii. 10. and particularly, the counsel of peace, which was between the Father and the Son, Zech. vi. 13. for "God was in Christ reconciling the world of his elect unto himself," planning the scheme of their peace and reconciliation; not imputing their trespasses unto them? for then no reconciliation could have been made; but to Christ, by whom atonement is made, and so salvation effected. But of the wisdom of God, in this decree of salvation, with respect to the author, subjects, time, and manner, more hereafter, under another head. Moreover, the decree of God, respecting the leaving, passing by, and rejection of others, and punishing them for their sins, his end in which being for the glorifying of his justice in their condemnation, is without any imputation either of unrighteousness or folly; for what if God, willing to shew his wrath, his indignation against sin, and to make his power known, in taking vengeance on sinners, endured with much long-suffering, their sinful course of life with much patience; even the vessels of wrath, justly deserving of it, fitted for destruction by their own sins, he appointed them to it, Rom. ix. 23. What charge of injustice or folly can be brought against him? Yea, even such decrees of God as are about the sinful actions of men, are not destitute of wisdom, of the highest wisdom. The sin and fall of Adam, so momentous, and of such consequence as to affect all mankind, could never have been without the knowledge and will of God; he could have prevented it if he would; but he left, as he decreed to leave, man to the mutability of his will; the consequence of which was his fall: and, as he designed, so in his infinite wisdom, he has overruled this greatest of all evils; the source of all that has been in the world since, for the greatest good, the salvation of men by Christ; whereby all his perfections are glorified: so the sinful actions of men are, by the permissive will of God, suffered to be, and are sometimes apparently overruled for some important end; as the selling of Joseph into Egypt by his brethren; and especially the crucifixion of Christ by the wicked Jews; both decreed by God. And so wicked men are suffered to commit the grossest sins, as Pharaoh, that God may be glorified in his justice, through inflicting his judgments on them; by the execution of which he is known, and his name celebrated with praise and glory, Exod. ix. 16. And likewise the failings and sins of God's people serve for the humbling of them, and the exercise of their graces; and so are overruled for good. But then by this we are not authorized, nor encouraged to do evil, that good may come; God only can overrule it to serve any good purpose.

The wisdom of God is displayed in his secret transactions with Christ in the covenant of grace; it appears in making such a covenant which is ordered in all things, for his own glory, the glory of the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; and for the good of his people in time, and for their everlasting happiness hereafter; being stored with promises and blessings of all sorts, peculiarly suitable for them: in appointing Christ to be the Mediator and Surety of it, and putting the said promises and blessings into his hands, and also their persons, for safety and security; all which were done in eternity. But,

II. The wisdom of God is more clearly manifested in his visible works in time; *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!* Psal. civ. 24. And,

1. It appears in the works of creation: the making of the heavens and the earth is always ascribed to the wisdom, understanding, and discretion of God, Psal. cxxxvi. 5. Prov. iii. 19, 20. Jer. x. 12. Whole volumes have been written on this subject, the wisdom of God in creation; and more might; the subject is not exhausted. If we look up to the starry heavens, and the luminaries, the work of his fingers, curiously wrought; as what are wrought with the

ngers of men usually are; we may observe a wonderful display of divine wis-
om; in the sun that rules by day, and in the moon that rules by night, and in
e stars also; all which shed their benign influences on the earth: particularly
the sun, the fountain of heat and light; in the situation of it, not so far from
e earth as to be of no use to it, nor so near as to hurt it; in its circular mo-
on, either about our earth, or on its own axis, whereby nothing is hid from
e heat and light of it, at one time or another; and which performs its revolu-
ons so punctually, and with so much regularity, and so exactly answers the
d of its destination, that it seems as if it was wise and knowing itself; *the sun*
oweth his going down, Psalm civ. 19. If we descend into the airy region,
d could but enter into the treasures of the snow and rain, which God has in
serve there, and wisely distributes on the earth at proper times; how he binds
p the water in his thick cloud, and the cloud is not rent with the weight thereof;
w he balances and poises these ponderous bodies, that they are not over-set,
d burst, and fall with their own weight; by which they would wash away
ies, towns, and villages, and the fruits of the earth; but causes them to descend
gentle showers, and in small drops; whereby the earth becomes fruitful; we
nnot but observe amazing wisdom. If we come down to the earth, we may
hold, besides men, the innumerable inhabitants of it, placed on it to cultivate
; "the cattle on a thousand hills;" the pastures covered with flocks; the val-
s clothed with corn; grass growing for the beasts, and herb for the service of
an; "wine to make his heart glad; oil to cause his face to shine; and bread
at strengthens his heart," and in the bowels of it, metals and minerals of divers
rts, gold, silver, brass, and iron, for artificers that work in each of them; and
l for the use, and to increase the wealth of men: the wisdom, as well as the
odness of God, must be discerned. The structure of the bodies of creatures
very wonderfully fitted for their different actions and uses; fishes for swim-
ing, birds for flying, beasts for walking and running; some more slowly, and
me more swiftly; but especially the texture of the human body, in all its parts,
very surprising, it being curiously wrought; no embroidery, or work with a
edle, exceeding it: the organs of the eye are admirably fitted for seeing; the
rts of the ear for hearing; the instruments of speech, the tongue, mouth, and
ps, for speaking; the hands and arms for working, and feet for walking; as
ell as all the other parts of the body, framed and disposed for various services;
which may be added, the subserviency of all creatures to one another, and
pecially to man, for whose sake the world was made, and all things in it; it
as designed for an habitation for him, and was made and furnished with
ery thing for his use and service, for his convenience and pleasure, before he
as created; and when he was created, in the image of God, dominion was
iven him over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field;
e herbage of the earth was provided both for meat and medicine; the cattle,
me for food, some for clothing, some for carriage, and some for cultivation
f the earth; and all were made for the glory of God, as the ultimate end; *for*

his *pleasure they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. and all his works, in their way, praise him, declare his glory, and shew forth his handy work.

2. The wisdom of God appears in the works of providence. It may be observed in the various returning seasons; seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, night and day; which keep their constant revolutions and stated course; scarce any thing ever preposterous. Rain is given from heaven, and fruitful seasons. In some of the eastern countries, as in Canaan, rain fell but twice a year, called the former and latter rain; the one when the seed was sown, to bring it up, the other just before harvest, to plump the corn; and both constantly fell at their usual and appointed times: and where rain is very scarce, as in Egypt, the river Nile overflows its banks, at a certain time of the year; which leaving a slime, makes the earth fruitful, and answers all the purposes of rain. The provision made for all creatures, suitable to their natures, is an abundant proof of the wisdom of God: as it requires wisdom, as well as faithfulness, in a steward, to give to every one under his care, their portion of meat in due season; so the wisdom of God is wonderfully displayed, not only in filling men's hearts with food and gladness; but in giving to the beasts their food, every one agreeable to their nature, "and to the young ravens that cry;" in opening his hand of providence and satisfying the desires of all living; in giving largely and liberally, and in a proper time, meat to all whose eyes wait on him; even his vast numerous family of creatures. He has the charge over the earth, and disposes of the whole world, and all things in it; he sits on the circle of the earth, and beholds all that are in it, and that are done in it; he places men in different stations of life, so as to have a dependence upon, and a connection with each other: he wisely governs, rules and, overrules all things, for the mutual good of men, and his own glory: he does all things after the counsel of his will, in the wisest and best manner, and to answer the best ends and purposes; he orders the various scenes of prosperity and adversity, and sets the one against the other; so that there is no finding any thing after him, or making them otherwise and better than they are; particularly, he maketh all things work together for the good of his people; for the trial of their grace, and to make them meet for glory; nor is there any one trial or exercise they meet with, but what there is a necessity of it, and is for the best; yea, there is infinite wisdom in the most intricate providences, and which are now difficult to account for, and to reconcile to the promises and perfections of God; but when the mystery of providence is finished, and the judgments of God are made manifest, and all are seen in one view, in an harmonious connection together; the wisdom of God, in every part, will appear striking and amazing; as when a man looks on the wrong side of a piece of tapestry, or only views it in detached pieces, he is scarcely able to make any thing of it; nor can he discern art and beauty in it; but when it is all put together, and viewed on its right side, the wisdom, the contrivance, and art of the maker are observed with admiration.

3. The wisdom of God is to be seen in the great work of redemption and

alvation by Christ; *herein he hath abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence,* Eph. i. 7, 8. Wisdom and prudence are displayed in other works of God; but in this all wisdom and prudence, and that in abundance, and which ppear,

In the person fixed upon to be the Redeemer. Not any of the sinful ace of men, for they all having sinned, all need a Redeemer; nor can any one edeem himself, and much less redeem another: nor any of the angels; for whatever good will they might bear to such work, none were equal to it; and herefore God put no trust in them, nor committed any such trust unto them; but his own Son, him he appointed and fore-ordained to be the Redeemer of his hosen people; the middle person in the Trinity, and most proper to be the Mediator; the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, and by whom all things were made, and so equal to such an undertaking; the Son of God; and it was more seemly and suitable to his relation and character, as a Son, to be appointed, to be sent, and to obey, than either of the other persons, and particularly the Father; and by having two natures, divine and human, united in one person, the Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh, he was the fittest person to be employed in this service; partaking of both natures, he was the only proper person to be the Mediator between God and Man, to be the day's-man, and lay his hand on both, and reconcile those two parties at variance, and to do what respected both, even "things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Being man, he could have compassion, as he had, on the lost miserable race of men, and, in his love and pity, redeem them; he was capable of being made under the law, and yielding obedience to it; which, being broken by the sin of men, was necessary to the redemption of them, and of suffering the penalty of the law, death; both which have been done by him, and thereby the law is magnified, and made more honourable, than it could have been by the obedience of all the angels in heaven, or by the sufferings of all the damned in hell; and hereby also satisfaction was made for sin, in the same nature that sinned, which seemed necessary, or however, it was a wise disposition, that so it should be. But what most of all displays the wisdom of God in this affair, is, that since all human nature was depraved and corrupted with sin, how a clean and sinless nature could be produced out of an unclean one, which yet was necessary to making atonement for sin in it; which difficulty infinite wisdom, and almighty power, have surmounted by Christ's birth of a virgin, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; whence what was born of her was the holy Thing, and so could be, and was offered up, without spot to God. Add to this, that it was not an human person, but an human nature, Christ assumed; it was flesh he took, the seed of Abraham, and is called the holy Thing, but not a person; it never subsisted of itself, but from the moment of its production was taken into union with the person of the Son of God; which was wisely ordered for our good, and the glory of God; for had it been a distinct person of itself, the actions and sufferings of it would have been finite, and of no benefit to mankind; his righteousness would have been, though pure and spotless, but the righteousness of a creature; and could have been of no use, but to itself: whereas, through the union of the human nature, to the person of the Son of God, it became the righteousness of God, and so imputable to many. Once more, through Christ's being man, he became our near kinsman, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; and so the right of redemption belonged to him; hence the same word *Goel*, in the Hebrew language, signifies both a redeemer and a near kinsman.

But then the person pitched upon to be the Redeemer, is God as well as man; and so as he had pity for men as man, he had a zeal for God and his glory, as a divine person; and would be, as he was, concerned for the glorifying all his divine perfections, one as well as another. Being God, he could put an infinite virtue into his actions and sufferings, as man, whereby the end of them would be sufficiently answered. Hence his righteousness is the righteousness of God, and is unto all, and upon all them that believe; his blood, the blood of the Son of God, which cleanses from all sin; his sacrifice, the sacrifice of his whole human nature, in union with himself, a divine person; and so sufficient to put away sin, by a full satisfaction for it; being God, he could support the human nature, under the weight of all the sins of his people, and of all the wrath and punishment due unto them; which otherwise must have been intolerable. Being the mighty God, he was mighty to save, and his own arm has wrought out salvation. The great God, is our Saviour. Now the finding out such a fit person to be the Redeemer of men, is to be ascribed solely to the wisdom of God: had all men been summoned together, and this declared unto them, that God was willing they should be redeemed, could they pitch upon a proper person to redeem them; and had the angels been called in to assist with their counsel, after long consultation, they would never have been able to have proposed one fit for this work; for who could have thought of the Son of God, and proposed his becoming man, and suffering, and dying in the stead of men, to redeem them? this is *nodus deo vindice dignus*; what God only could have found out; and he claims it to himself; *I*, the only wise God, *have found a ransom*, Job xxxiii. 24. see Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20.

The wisdom of God appears in the persons fixed upon to be redeemed; not all men, but some; partly to shew the sovereignty of God, in redeeming whom he pleases; and partly since all had sinned, and were deserving of death, to glorify his grace and mercy in the redemption of some, and his justice in the destruction of others; and in both to shew that he could, in right, have destroyed them all, if he pleased; and likewise, that it might appear he was no respecter of persons, he has not limited the grace of redemption to any particular family or nation; but has redeemed some out of every nation, tongue, kindred, and people; and whereas his view therein is to magnify the riches of his grace, in order to shew the freeness of it, he sent Christ to die for, and redeem, not the good and the righteous, who appeared so to themselves and others, but ungodly sinners, the worst and chief of sinners, Rom. v. 6—10.

The wisdom of God may be observed in the way and manner in which redemption is obtained; which being by the price of the blood of Christ, and in a way of full satisfaction to law and justice; the different claims of mercy and justice, which seemed to clash with one another, are reconciled: mercy insisting that the sinner be pardoned and saved, that it might be glorified; and justice required that the law should take place, its sentence be executed, and punishment inflicted, that so the rights and honours of law and justice might be maintained; which, by this happy method wisdom has pitched upon, they both agree; "mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other." Sin is condemned in the flesh of Christ, vengeance is taken on it, punishment inflicted for it, and yet the sinner saved from sin, from condemnation, wrath, and ruin. Redemption is also wrought out in a way most mortifying to Satan. Through envy he sought the ruin of men; contrived it, brought it it about, and triumphed in it: but what a mortification must it be to that proud spirit, that one of the woman's seed he had ruined, should bruise his head; that the Son of God should be manifested in human nature, to destroy his works, to destroy himself, to spoil his principalities, and redeem mankind; and be exalted in the same nature, to the highest pitch of honour and glory imaginable; to sit at the right hand of God; angels, authorities, principalities, and powers, subject to him?

The wisdom of God is to be discerned in the time of man's redemption; which was the most opportune and seasonable; it was in due time; in the fulness of time fixed and agreed upon between the Father and the Son, and must be the fittest; it was after the faith and patience of God's people had been sufficiently tried, even for the space of four thousand years from the first hint of a Redeemer; after the Saviour, and his sacrifice, had been prefigured by types, shadows, and sacrifices, for so long a time, and the use, end, and efficacy of sacrifices had been sufficiently known, and God would have them no longer; then said Christ, Lo, I come, &c. when the Gentile world was covered with darkness, blindness, and ignorance, and abounded with all kind of wickedness; when immorality, formality, hypocrisy, and neglect of the word and worship of God among the Jews prevailed; by all which it may be most clearly seen, there was need of a Saviour and Redeemer; for who can declare is generation, the wickedness of it? then, in the infinite wisdom of God, Christ was sent to redeem sinners.

4. The wisdom of God shines in the gospel, the good news of salvation by Christ; in its doctrines, and in its ordinances; that itself is called, *the wisdom of God in a mystery*; *the hidden wisdom*; *the manifold wisdom of God*, 1 Cor ii. 7. Eph. iii. 10. every doctrine is a display of it; to instance only in justification, and the pardon of sin. Justification is by the free grace of God, and yet, in strict justice; grace provided Christ to work out a righteousness; grace accepts of it in the room and stead of sinners, and grace imputes it to them: the righteousness of Christ, by which men are justified, is commensurate to the law and

justice of God; so that "God is just, whilst the justifier of him that believes in Jesus:" the grace of faith is wisely appointed to receive this righteousness; it is of faith, that it might appear to be of grace, and that pride and boasting might be excluded; which, had any other been appointed, would not have been so apparent; this being a soul-humbling, a soul-emptying grace, which receives all from God, and gives him all the glory: pardon of sin is of free grace, and yet through the blood of Christ; and is both an act of grace and of justice; God is just and faithful to forgive it, as well as gracious and merciful; he forgives sin, and takes vengeance on the inventions of the sinner: pardon proceeds upon the foot of satisfaction, which grace provides; and so both grace and justice agree in it, and are glorified by it: the ordinances of the gospel are wisely instituted to answer the end of them; baptism to represent the overwhelming sufferings of Christ, his burial, and resurrection from the dead: the ordinance of the supper, to shew forth his death; the bread broken is a proper emblem of his broken body; the wine poured out, of his blood shed, and his soul poured out unto death for sinners. Wisely has God appointed men, and not angels, to minister the word, and administer ordinances; "men of the same passions with others;" who may be heard and conversed with, without dread and terror; frail, mortal men, earthen vessels, in which this treasure is put, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of men; and a standing ministry is wisely fixed, to be continued to the end of the world, for the use, relief, refreshment, and comfort of God's people, as well as the conversion of sinners; and all for the glory of God.

v. The wisdom of God may be seen in the government and preservation of the church of God, in all ages; in guiding them by immediate revelation, without the written word, when the church was in a few families, and the lives of men long; then with written laws, statutes, and ordinances, suited to the infant-state of the church, among the people of Israel; and now with ordinances, more agreeable to its adult state, under the gospel-dispensation, throughout the world: and as it is a church and kingdom not of this world, it is supported, not by worldly, but spiritual means; and wonderfully has it been preserved, in all ages, and increased, amidst all the persecution of men; no weapon formed against it has prospered; and God has made it, and will still more make it to appear that he rules in Jacob unto the ends of the earth.

OF THE WILL OF GOD, AND ITS SOVEREIGNTY.

HAVING considered the attributes of God which belong to his understanding, as an intelligent Spirit, his knowledge and wisdom, I now proceed to consider his Will, and the sovereignty of it. And shall prove,

I. That there is a Will in God. In all intelligent beings there is a will, as well as an understanding; as in angels and men, so in God; as he has an understanding which is infinite and unsearchable; so he has a will, to do what he knows is most fitting to be done. His understanding influences and guides his will, and his will determines all his actions; and his will being thus wisely directed, is called, *the counsel of his will*, Eph. i. 11. A will is frequently ascribed to God in scripture; *The will of the Lord be done*, Acts xxi. 14. *Who has resisted his will*, Rom. ix. 19. *Having made known unto us the mystery of his will*, Eph. i. 9. and in many other places; the will of God is no other than God himself willing; it is essential to him; it is his nature and essence; it is not to be separated, or to be considered as distinct from it, or as a part of it, of which it is composed; which would be contrary to the simplicity of God; or to his being a simple uncompounded Spirit; which has been established. Will is ascribed to each of the divine persons; to the Father, John vi. 39, 40. to the Son, as a divine person, John v. 21. and xvii. 24. and who also, as man, has a will distinct from that, though subjected to it, John vi. 38. Luke xxii. 42. and to the Spirit, who is said to forbid, and not to suffer some things to be done; that is, to nill them; and to nill is an act of the will, as well as to will, Acts xvi. 6, 7. and he is said to divide his gifts to men severally, as he will, 1 Cor. xii. 11. And these three, as they are the one God, they agree in one, in one mind and will.

II. I shall next shew what the will of God is: there is but one will in God; but for our better understanding it, it may be distinguished. I shall not trouble the reader with all the distinctions of it made by men; some are false, and others vain and useless; such as into absolute and conditional, antecedent and consequent, effectual and ineffectual, &c. the distinction of the secret and revealed will of God has generally obtained among sound divines; the former is properly the will of God, the latter only a manifestation of it. Whatever God has determined within himself, whether to do himself, or to do by others, or to suffer to be done, whilst it is in his own breast, and is not made known by any event in providence, or by prophecy, that is his secret will; such are the deep things of God, the thoughts of his heart, the counsels and determinations of his mind; which are impenetrable to others; but when these open, by events in providence, or by prophecy, then they become the revealed will of God. God's secret will becomes revealed by events in providence, whether it be considered general or special; the general providence of God, with respect to the world and church, is no other than the execution, and so the manifestation of his secret will, with respect to both: to the world, its production, the origin of nations, the settlement of them in the various parts of the world; the rise of states and kingdoms, and particularly the four monarchies, and the succession of them: to the church, in the line of Seth, from Adam, and in the line of Shem, from Noah, and in the people of Israel, from Abraham, to the coming of Christ: and the book of Revelation is a discovery of the secret will of God with respect to both: from the coming of Christ to the end of the world; the greatest part of which has been fulfilled, and the rest will be: as the destruction of antichrist, and the antichristian states; the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; and the spiritual and personal kingdom of Christ. These are now already revealed, though the time when they will take place is still in the secret will of God. The providence of God may be considered as special, with respect to particular persons; there is a purpose or secret will of God, with respect to every man; and there is a time fixed for every purpose; a time to be born, and a time to die; and for every thing that befals men between their birth and death: all which open in time, in providence, and what was secret becomes revealed: so we know that we are born, who our parents, the time and circumstances of our birth, as related to us; we know what has befallen us, whether in an adverse or prosperous way; God has performed what is appointed for us, as Job says of himself; but then, as he observes, many such things are with him, in his secret will. We know not what shall befal us; and though we know that we shall die, that is revealed; but when and where, in what manner and circumstance, we know not; that remains in the secret will of God. Some things which belong to the secret will of God, become revealed by prophecy; so it was made known to Abraham, that his seed, according to the secret will or purpose of God, should be in a land, not theirs, four hundred years, and be afflicted, and come out with great substance: nor did God hide from Abraham what he secretly willed to do, in destroying Sodom and Gomorrah: and, indeed, it has been usual for the Lord to do nothing but what he reveals to his servants the prophets; particularly all things concerning Christ, his incarnation, offices, obedience, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow, were all signified beforehand, to the prophets, by the Spirit of Christ in them.

The will of God, which he would have done by men, is revealed in the law, that is called his will, Rom. ii. 18. this was made known to Adam, by inscribing it on his heart, whereby he knew his duty to God, to be performed by him; this, though sadly obliterated by sin, yet there are some remains of it in the Gentiles, who do by nature the things contained in it; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts: a new edition of this law was delivered to the Israelites, written on tables of stone, by the finger of God; according to which they were to behave themselves, and hold the tenure of the land of Canaan, and enjoy the privileges of it: and in regeneration the law of God is put into the inward parts, and written on the hearts of God's people; who being transformed, by the renewing of their minds, come to know what is the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God, Rom. xii. 2. this respects man's duty both to God and men.

There is the revealed will of God in the gospel; which respects the kind intentions, and gracious regards of God to men; and discovers what before was his secret will concerning them; as, that he has chosen some to everlasting life and happiness; that he has appointed these to salvation by Christ; and appointed him to be their Saviour; that Christ undertook to do this will of God, and came from heaven to earth, to do it, and has finished it; and that it is the will of God that these should be regenerated and sanctified; and "that they should never perish, but have everlasting life," Eph. i. 4, 5. John vi. 38. 1 Thess. iv. 3. John vi. 39, 40. Matt. xviii. 14. But then, though all this is the revealed will of God, in the gospel, yet as to particular persons interested herein, it is, in a great measure, a secret; election of God, and so the rest, may be known by the gospel coming with power into the heart, and by a work of grace upon it; and the knowledge of it should be sought after; yet it is not attained to but by such who are favoured with a full assurance of faith; and as to others, though it may, in a judgment of charity, because of their declared experiences, their savoury discourses, and holy conversation, be concluded of them, that they are the elect of God, &c. yet it cannot be certainly known, but by divine revelation, as it might be by the apostle, that Clement, and other fellow-labourers of his, had their names written in the book of life, Phil. iv. 3. It is the revealed will of God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and that all must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that after death there will be a judgment; and though it is revealed, that a day is fixed, as well as a person appointed to judge the world in righteousness; yet "of that day and hour knows no man;" no, not the angels; but God only. So that, upon the whole, though there is some foundation for this distinction of the secret and revealed will of God, yet it is not quite clear; there is a mixture, part of the will of God is, as yet, secret, and part of it revealed, with respect to the same subject, as what has been observed plainly shews.

The most accurate distinction of the will of God, is into that of precept and purpose; or, the commanding and decreeing will of God.

God's will of precept, or his commanding will, is that which is often spoken of in scripture, as what should be done by men, and which is desirable they might have knowledge of, and be compleat in, Matt. vii. 21. and xii. 50. Col. 10. and iv. 12. This is the rule of men's duty; which consists of the fear of God, and keeping his commands; this is done but by a few, and by none perfectly; every sin is a transgression of it; when it is done aright it is done in faith, from love, and to the glory of God: every good man desires to do it in the best manner, and, if it could be, perfectly; even as it is done by angels in heaven. God, by the declaration of this his will, shews what he approves of, and what is acceptable to him, when done aright; and is made to render men inexcusable, that do it not, and to make it appear right in justice to inflict punishment on such persons.

The decreeing will of God is only, properly speaking, his Will; the other is his Word: this is the rule of his own actions; he does all things in heaven and earth after his will, the counsel of it; and this will is always done, cannot be resisted, frustrated, and made void; he does whatever he wills; "his counsel stands, and the thoughts of his heart are to all generations;" and this is sometimes fulfilled by those who have no regard to his will of precept, and have no knowledge of this, even while they are doing it; as Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Jews and Gentiles, in doing what they did against Christ, Acts iv. 27, 28. and the ten kings, into whose hearts God put it to fulfil his will, in giving their kingdoms to the beast, Rev. xvii. 17. and this will of God should be bore in mind in every thing we intend to do or go about; saying, if the Lord will, we will do this, and that, and the other, 1 Cor. iv. 19. James iv. 13—15. and this should be owned and acknowledged, and submitted to every state and condition of life, whether of prosperity or adversity, or in whatsoever befals us in our own persons, or in our friends and relations, Acts xxi. 14. and this properly speaking is the one and only will of God. I shall next enquire,

III. What are the objects of it.

I. God himself, not his Being, perfections, and modes of subsisting; as the paternity of the Father; the generation of the Son; and the spiration of the Spirit. These naturally and necessarily exist, and do not depend upon the will of God: but it is his own glory; The Lord hath made all things for himself; that is, for his own glory, Prov. xvi. 4. He wills his own glory in all he does; as all things are of him, as the efficient Cause; and through him, as the wise disposer of them; so they are to him, to his glory, as the final Cause, and last end of all; and this he wills necessarily; he cannot but will his own glory; as "he will not give his glory to another;" he cannot will it to another; that would be to deny himself.

II. All things without himself, whether good or evil, are the objects of his will; or what his will is some way or other concerned in: there is a difference, indeed, between the objects of God's knowledge and power, and the objects of his will; for though he knows all things knowable, in his understanding, and his power reaches to all that is possible, though not made; yet he wills not all things willable, if the word may be allowed, or that might be willed; wherefore, as Amesius* observes, though God is said to be omniscient and omnipotent, yet not omnivolent.

1. All good things.—All things in nature; all things are made by him, and all were originally good, that were made by him, even very good; and all were made according to his will; *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure*; or by thy will, *they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. even the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are.—All things in providence. God's kingdom of providence rules over all, and extends to all creatures, angels and men, and every other, and to all events that befal them; not a sparrow falls to the ground without the will of God; *He doth according to his will in the army of heaven*; in the heavenly hosts of angels; *and among the inhabitants of the earth*, Dan. iv. 35. there is nothing comes to pass but what God has willed, ordered, and appointed; *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?* Lam. iii. 37. All things in grace are according to the will of God. All

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* Medulla Theolog. l. 1. c. 7. s. 47.

spiritual blessings in Christ, all grace given to the elect in Christ, before the world was; the choice of them in Christ; predestination to adoption by him; redemption through his blood; regeneration, sanctification, and the eternal inheritance; all are according to the good pleasure of his will, 2 Tim. i. 9. Eph. i. 11. James i. 18. 1 Thess. iv. 3.

2. All evil things are the objects of God's will. These are of two sorts. 1. *Malum pœnæ*, the evil of afflictions; whether in a way of chastisement, or of punishment: if in a way of chastisement, as they are to the people of God, they are according to the will of God; they do not spring out of the dust, nor come by chance; but are by the will, order, and appointment of God; as to quality, quantity, duration, ends, and uses, Job xxiii. 14. Mic. vi. 9. 1 Thess. iii. 3. and which are consistent with the justice, holiness, wisdom, love, and goodness of God. If they are in a way of punishment, as they are to wicked and ungodly men; there is no reason to complain of them, since they are less than their sins deserve; and not at all unworthy of a righteous God to will to inflict on them, Lam. iii. 39. all judgments, calamities, and distresses, which come upon kingdoms, nations, cities, towns, and particular persons, are all of God, and according to his will, Amos iii. 6. Not that God wills these things for the sake of them; or as taking delight in the afflictions and miseries of his creatures, Lam. iii. 33. Ezek. xviii. 32. but for the sake of some good: the afflictions of his people are for their spiritual good, as well as for his own glory: and the punishment of the wicked is for the glorifying of his justice.—2. *Malum culpæ*, or the evil of fault and blame, that is, sin: about this there is some difficulty how the will of God should be concerned in it, consistent with its purity and holiness: that the will of God is some way or other concerned with it is most certain; for he either wills it or not wills it: the latter cannot be said; because nothing comes to pass, God not willing it, Lam. iii. 37. or he neither wills it, nor not wills it; that is, he has no care about it, nor concern at all with it; and so it is without the verge, and not within the reach of his providence; which cannot be admitted, and which none will say, but those who are atheistically inclined, see Ezek. ix. 9. Zeph. i. 12. Besides, as Beza[p], and other divines argue, unless God had voluntarily permitted sin to be, there could be no display, neither of his punitive justice, nor of his mercy: to which may be added that God's foreknowledge of sin most fully proves his will in it; that God foreknew sin would be, is certain; as the fall of Adam; since he made a provision, in Christ, for the saving of men out of it, before it was; and so other sins; see 2 Sam. xii. 11. and xvi. 22. Now certain and immutable foreknow-ledge, such as the fore-knowledge of God is, is founded upon some certain and immutable cause; which can be no other than the divine will; God foreknows, certainly, that such and such things will be; because he has determined in his will they shall be. To set this affair in the best light, it will be proper to consider, what is in sin, and relative to it: there is the act of sin, and there is the guilt of sin,

[p] Maccov. Loc. Commun. c. 24. p. 195.

which is an obligation to punishment, and the punishment itself. Concerning the two last there can be no difficulty; that God should will that men that sin should become guilty; be reckoned, accounted, and treated as such; or lie under obligation to punishment; nor that he should will the punishment of them, and appoint and foreordain them to it, for it, Prov. xvi. 4. Jude 4. The only difficulty is, about the act of sin; and this may be considered either as natural or moral; or the act, and the ataxy, disorder, irregularity, and vitiosity of it: as an action, barely considered, it is of God, and according to his will; without which, and the concourse of his providence, none can be performed; he is the fountain and source of all action and motion; in him all live, move, and have their being, Acts xvii. 28. but then the vitiosity and irregularity of it, as it is an aberration from the law of God, and a transgression of it, is of men only; and God cannot be said to will this; he forbids it, he abhors and detests it; he takes no pleasure in it; he is of purer eyes than even to behold it, with approbation and delight. God cannot will it as sin, or for the sake of itself; but for the sake of some good to be brought about through it, as the fall of Adam, for the glorifying of his justice and mercy, in punishing some of his posterity, and saving others: the sin of Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt, for the good of Joseph and his father's family, and others; and the sin of the Jews, in crucifying Christ, for the redemption and salvation of men. And besides, God may will one sin as a punishment for another; as it is most certain he has in the case of the Israelites, Hos. iv. 9—13. of the heathen philosophers, Rom. i. 28. and of the papists, 2 Thess. ii. 9—12. Once more, though God may be said, in such senses, to will sin, yet he wills it in a different way than he wills that which is good; he does not will to do it himself, nor to do it by others; but permits it to be done; and which is not a bare permission, but a voluntary permission; and is expressed by God's giving up men to their own hearts lusts, and by suffering them to walk in their own sinful ways, Psal. lxxxi. 12. Acts xiv. 16. he wills it not by his effective will, but by his permissive will; and therefore cannot be chargeable with being the author of sin; since there is a wide difference between doing it himself, and doing it by others, or ordering it to be done, which only can make him the author of sin; and voluntarily permitting or suffering it to be done by others. I proceed to consider,

IV. The nature and properties of the will of God.

1. It is natural and essential to him; it is his very nature and essence; his will is himself willing; and therefore there can be but one will in God; for there is but one God, whose nature and essence is one; for though there are three persons in the Godhead, there is but one undivided nature common to them all, and so but one will; they are one, and they agree in one; God is in one mind, or will; though there may be distinctions of his will, and different objects of it, and divers ways in which he wills, yet it is by one single eternal act of his will, he wills all things. Hence also his will is incommunicable to a creature; the will of God cannot otherwise be a creature's, but as that may approve of it, aquiesce

n it, and submit unto it; even it was incommunicable to the human nature of Christ, though taken into union with the person of the Son of God; yet his ivine will, and his human will, are distinct from each other, though the one is ubject to the other, John vi. 38. Luke xxii. 42.

II. The will of God is eternal, as may be concluded from the attribute of eternity; for if God is eternal, as he certainly is, even from everlasting to everlasting God, then his will must be eternal, since it is his nature and essence: and rom his immutability; who changes not, and with whom there is no shadow f turning; but if any new will arises in God in time, which was not in eternity, there would be a change in him; he would not be the same in time he was n eternity; nor the same in eternity he is in time; whereas he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: and from the fore-knowledge of God, which is ternal; *Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world*, or rom eternity, Acts xv. 18. and now as God's fore-knowledge arises from his will, God foreknows what will be, as has been observed, because he has determined, in his will, what shall be; so if his knowledge is eternal, his will must e eternal. Likewise, this may be illustrated by the decree of election; that was, certainly, before men had done either good or evil; was from the beginning, or from everlasting; even before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. nd as the decree and determination of the will of God was so early, the same may be concluded of all others; add to all which, the will of God is concerned with all things that have been from the beginning of the world, now are, or shall e to the end of it; and therefore must be prior to the existence of the world, nd things in it; and if prior to them, then prior to time; and if prior to time, must be eternal; for we know of nothing before time but what is eternal.

III. The will of God is immutable: immutability is expressly ascribed to the counsel of God; that is, to the will and purpose of God, Heb. vi. 17. and may be established from the attribute of immutability; for if God is unchangeably the same, as he is, then his will must be the same, since it is his nature and essence: a change is made in the will of a creature, either by beginning to will what it did not before, or by ceasing to will what it has willed: now the cause of beginning a new will, or willing what it did not, supposes previous ignorance of the thing now begun to be willed; not knowing the fitness and propriety of it, being ignorant of its nature, excellence, and utility; for of an unknown thing there can be no desire and will: but such a change of will can never take place in God, on such a footing; since it is not only contrary to his eternity and immutability, but to his knowledge, whose understanding is infinite: or a creature changes its will, when it ceases to will what it has willed; which is either of choice, or of obligation to it; of choice, when something unforeseen occurs, which causes it to change its will, and take another course: but nothing of this kind can befal God, before whom all things are at once and together, naked and open; even from all eternity: or else of force, being obliged unto it, because it cannot accomplish its will, and therefore drops it, and takes another course: But who hath resisted his will, the will of God, so as to cause him to cease from it, and drop it? If God changes his will, it must be either for the better or the worse; and either way it would betray imperfection in him, and want of wisdom; God may change his outward dispensations of things, but he never changes his will: repentance attributed to him is no proof of it; He is in one mind, and who can turn him? his will is not to be turned nor altered, no not by the prayers of his people. But of these things see more under the attribute of immutability, before treated of.

IV. The will of God is always efficacious; there are no wishes, would-bees, or feeble velleities in God; his will is always effected, never made null and void; he does whatever he pleases, or wills; his counsel always stands, and he ever does his pleasure; otherwise he would not be almighty, as he is: it must be for want of power, if his will is not fulfilled, which cannot be said; as he is omnipotent, so is his will; yea, Austin calls[9] it, his most omnipotent will: if this was not the case, there would be somewhat, or some one superior to him; whereas he is God over all, the most High, higher than the highest; and can never be contradicted by any: and was his will ineffectual he would be frustrated and disappointed of his end: but as nothing comes to pass which man says, and the Lord commands it not; so every thing the Lord says, wills, and orders, most certainly comes to pass; *For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?* yea, he hath sworn, saying, *Surely, as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, it shall stand,* Isai xiv. 24, 27. Besides, if his will was not efficacious, or it failed of accomplishment, he would not be happy: when a man's will is ineffectual, and he cannot accomplish it, it gives him uneasiness, it makes him unhappy; but this can never be said of God, who is the blessed, the blessed God, blessed for evermore.

V. The will of God has no cause out of himself, for then there would be something prior to him, and greater and more excellent than he; as every cause is before its effect, and more excellent than that; and his will would be dependent on another, and so he not be the independent Being he is: nor can there be any impulsive or moving cause of his will; because there is in him no passive power to work upon; he is purely act, *actus simplicissimus*, a pure, active Spirit: if he consisted of act and power, he would not be the simple and uncompounded Spirit he is; wherefore, to be impelled or moved by any cause, would be contrary to his simplicity, before established: he may indeed be said to will one thing for another; but then that which he wills for another, is no moving cause of his will; these may have the nature of cause, and effect between themselves; but neither of them the cause of the will of God; nor is there any final cause of what he wills and does but his own glory; and it would be madness to seek for a cause of his willing that: and from this property of the will of God, it may be clearly discerned, that foreseen faith, holiness, and good works, cannot be the cause of God's will in the election of any to eternal life; and so the contrary, no cause of his will in the rejection of others.

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[9] De Civitate Dei, l. 13. c. 18.

VI. The will of God, for the same reason, is not conditional; for then it would be dependent on the condition to be performed; and not the will of God, but the performance of the condition, would be the first and chief in the attainment of the end thereby. And, to say no more, if, for instance, God willed to save all men conditionally; that is, on condition of faith and repentance; and to damn them if these conditions are wanting; who does not see that this conditional will, to save and to destroy, is equally the same? destruction is equally willed as salvation; and were is the general love of God to men, so much talked of? there is none at all to any.

VII. The will of God is most free and sovereign; as appears,

1. From the making of the world, and all things in it. That the world is eternal, few have asserted; that it was made, and made by God, is generally agreed; and by the will of God, as the scriptures assert, Rev. iv. 11. and the making of it, as to time and order, and things contained in it, is owing to the sovereign will of God; to what else but to his sovereignty can it be ascribed, that he has not made more worlds than he has, who could, if he would, have made ten thousand worlds? or that he should make this world when he did, and not sooner, when he could have made it millions of ages before, if he would? or that he should be six days making that, and all things in it, when he could have made them all in a moment, if he pleased? or that he made this world no larger than it is, and made no more kinds and species of creatures than he has, and those he has made no more numerous than they be? no reason can be assigned, but his sovereign will and pleasure.

2. The sovereignty of the will of God appears in providence, and in the various events of it; as in the births and deaths of men, which are neither of them of the will of men, but of the will of God; and there is a time for both fixed by his will; and in which his sovereignty may be seen; for to what else can it be ascribed, that such and such men should be born, and brought into the world, in such an age, and not before? and that they should go out of the world at the time, in the manner and circumstances they do? and that there should be such difference in men, in their states, conditions, and circumstances in life; that some should be rich, and others poor? riches and poverty are both at the disposal of God, as Agur's prayer shews; and God is the maker both of the rich and poor, not only as men, but as rich and poor men: and to what can this difference be attributed, but to the sovereign will of God? some are raised to great honour and dignity; and others live in a very low, mean, and abject state; but promotion comes neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; but God puts down one, and sets up another, as he pleases; and these differences and changes may be observed in the same persons, as in Job, who was for many years the greatest man in all the East, and, on a sudden, was stript of all his riches, honour, and glory, and upon a dunghill; and

then, after a while, restored to twice the wealth and riches he had before. So Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest monarch then on earth, and when in the most flourishing circumstances, and in the height of his grandure, was degraded from his dignity, as a man and monarch, and driven to dwell among beasts, and to become and live like one of them; and, after all, was restored to his reason, and to his throne, and former greatness; which extorted from him such an acknowledgment of the sovereign will of God as perhaps is no where more strongly expressed; *He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?* Dan. iv. 35. Some are free from sickness and diseases of body all their days; their strength is firm, and no bands in their death, but die in their full strength: whilst others drag on a life attended with a variety of infirmities and disorders, to their graves; and this is the case of the best of men: to what can it be imputed, but to the sovereign will of God? and how otherwise can be accounted for the many abortions, untimely births, infants that never saw light; and others, as soon as their eyes are opened in this world, are shut again; when others not only go through the stages of infancy, childhood, and manhood, but arrive to a full age, and come to their graves like a shock of corn fully ripe? And a multitude of other things might be observed, in providence; which, though God has wise reasons for them, are unaccountable to us, but are obliged to refer them to his sovereign will and pleasure; who gives no account of his matters to the children of men.

3. The will of God appears to be sovereign in things sacred, spiritual, and religious, both with respect to angels and men; as that some of the angels should be elect, and confirmed by the grace of Christ, in the estate in which they were created, and be preserved from apostacy, whilst a large number of them were suffered to rebel against God, and leave their first state; for which they were cast down from heaven to hell, and reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day, and no mercy shewn to any of them; as has been to many of the apostate race of Adam. What other reason can be given for all this, but the sovereign will of God? Among men, some God loves, and some he hates; and that before good or evil are done by them; some he chooses to everlasting happiness, and others he passes by and rejects; he has mercy on some, and hardens others; just as he, in his sovereignty, wills and pleases: some are redeemed from among men, by Christ, even out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, whom he wills, and resolves to save; when others are left to perish in their sins: for which no other cause can be assigned than the sovereign will and pleasure of God. According to which also he dispenses his gifts to men, and these of different sorts; some fitting for public service, as to ministers of the gospel; and such he makes whensoever he pleases, and gives them gifts differing from one another; to some greater to others less, to some one talent and to others five, dividing to every man severally as he wills, according to his sovereign pleasure: the means of grace, the ministry of the word and

ordinances, in all ages, have been disposed of, just as seemed good in his sight; for many hundreds of years, God gave his word to Jacob, and his statutes unto Israel, and other nations knew them not; and these have been since distributed among the Gentiles, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; and how apparent is the sovereignty of God in favouring our British Isles, these Isles afar off, with the gospel, and gospel-ordinances, when so great a part of the world is denied them, and is covered with Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan darkness? and still more it is manifest in that these outward means are, to some, "the savour of life unto life, and to others the savour of death unto death." The special gifts of the grace of God, are bestowed upon men, according to the sovereign will of God; of his own will he regenerates some, and not others; calls by his grace, whom he pleases, when and by what means, according to his purpose; reveals the gospel, and the great things of it, to whom he would make them known; and hides them from the wise and prudent; even so Father, says Christ, for so it seemed good in thy sight; nor does he give any other reason for such a conduct. The graces of the Spirit of God are given to some, and not to others; as for instance, repentance, which is a grant from God, a gift of Christ, was bestowed on Peter, who denied his Lord; and withheld from Judas, that betrayed him. Faith, which is the gift of God, all men have it not; to some it is only given, when others have a spirit of slumber, eyes that they see not, and ears that they hear not. In short, eternal life, which is the free gift of God, through Christ, is given only by him, to as many as the Father has given him, and to these alike; the penny, which seems to mean eternal happiness, in the parable, is given to those who were called to labour in the vineyard in the eleventh hour, as to those who bore the heat and burden of the day: some do much service for Christ, and others very little, and yet all share the same glory. To what can all this be resolved, but into the sovereign will of God? who says, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* Matt. xx. 15. But though the will of God is sovereign, it always acts wisely: some sovereign princes will things rashly and foolishly; but God wills nothing contrary to his perfections of wisdom, justice, holiness, &c. and his will is therefore called *counsel*, and *the counsel of his will*, Isai. xxv. 1. and xlvi. 10. Eph. i. 11.

OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

NEXT to the attributes which belong to God, as an intelligent Spirit, to his understanding and will, may be considered, those which may be called Affections; for though, properly speaking, there are none in God, he being a most pure and simple act, free from all commotion and perturbation; yet there being some things said and done by him, which are similar to affections in intelligent beings, they are ascribed to him; as love, pity, hatred, anger, &c. from which must be removed every thing that is carnal, sensual, or has any degree of imperfection in it; and among these, Love stands in the first place; and this enters so much into the nature of God, that it is said, *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8, 16. So the Shekinah, or the divine majesty and glory, is, by the Jews[r], called אהבה Love; and the heathens give the same name to God; Plato expressly calls him Love; and Hesiod[s] speaks of love as the fairest and most beautiful among the immortal gods. In treating of this divine attribute, I shall,

I. Consider the objects of it.

1. The principal object of the love of God is himself. Self-love is in all intelligent beings; nor is it discommendable, when it is not carried to a criminal excess, and to the neglect of others; none are obliged to love others more than themselves, but as themselves, Matt. xxii. 39. [t]God first and chiefly loves himself; and hence he has made himself, that is, his glory, the ultimate end of all he does in nature, providence, and grace, Prov. xvi. 4. Rom. xi. 36. Rev. iv. 11. Eph. i. 6. and his happiness lies in contemplating himself, his nature and perfections; in that love, complacency and delight he has in himself; nor needs he, nor can he have any thing out of himself that can add to his essential happiness.

The three divine Persons in the Godhead mutually love each other; the Father loves the Son and the Spirit, the Son loves the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit loves the Father and the Son. That the Father loves the Son, is more than once said, John iii. 35. and v. 20. and the Son is sometimes called the well-beloved and dear Son of God, Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. Col. i. 13. he was from all eternity as "one brought up with him;" and was loved by him before the foundation of the world; and that with a love of complacency and delight; as he must, since "he is the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person," and is of the same nature, and possessed of all the same perfections with him, Prov. viii. 30, 31. John xvii. 24. Heb. i. 3. Col. ii. 9. yea, he loved him as his Servant, as the Mediator, in his state of humiliation, and obedience, and under all his sufferings, and on account of them; and even whilst he bore his wrath as the sinner's Surety, he was the object of his love, as his Son, Isai. xlii. 1. Matt. iii. 17. John x. 17. and now he is at his right hand, in human nature, he looks upon him with delight, and is well pleased with his sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness. The Father loves the Spirit; being the very breath of him, from whence he has his name, and proceeding from him, and possessing the same nature and essence with him, Job xxxiii. 4. Psal. xxxiii. 6. John xv. 26. 1 John v. 7. The Son loves the Father, of whom he is begotten, with whom he was brought up, in whose bosom he lay from all eternity, as his own and only begotten Son; and as man, the law of God was

[r] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 15. 1. & Lex. Cabal. p. 43, 44. [s] Theogonia, v. 120. [t] Praeclarum illud est & si quaeris rectum quoque & verum, ut eos qui nobis carissimi esse debeant, aeque ac nosmetipsos amemus; at vero plus fieri nullo facto potest, ne optandum quidem est in amicitia, ut me ille plus quam se amet, Cicero. Tusc. Quaest. l. 3.

in his heart; the sum of which is to love the Lord God with all the heart and soul; and as Mediator he shewed his love to him by an obedience to his commandment, even though that was to suffer death for his people, Psal. xl. 8. John xiv. 31. and x. 18. Phil. ii. 8. The Son also loves the Spirit, since he proceeds from him as from the Father, and is called the Spirit of the Son, Gal. iv. 6. and Christ often speaks of him with pleasure and delight, Isai. xlviii. 16. and lxi. 1. John xiv. 16—26. and xv. 26. and xvi. 7, 13. And the Spirit loves the Father and the Son, and sheds abroad the love of them both in the hearts of his people; he searches into the deep things of God, and reveals them to them; and takes of the things of Christ, and shews them unto them; and so is both the Comforter of them, and the Glorifier of him, 1 Cor. ii. 10—12. John xvi. 14.

11. All that God has made is the object of his love; all the works of creation, when he had made them; he looked over them, and saw that they were good, *very good*, Gen. i. 31. he was well pleased, and delighted with them; yea, he is said to *rejoice in his works*; Psal. civ. 31. he upholds all creatures in their beings, and is the Preserver of all, both men and beasts; and is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, Psal xxxvi. 6. and cxlv. 9. and particularly, rational creatures are the objects of his care, love, and delight: he loves the holy angels, and has shewn his love to them in choosing them to happiness; hence they are called *elect angels*, 1 Tim. v. 21. by making Christ the head of them, by whom they are confirmed in the estate in which they were created, Col. ii. 10. and by admitting them into his presence, allowing them to stand before him, and behold his face, Matt. xviii. 10. yea, even the devils, as they are the creatures of God, are not hated by him, but as they are apostate spirits from him: and so he bears a general love to all men, as they are his creatures, his offspring, and the work of his hands; he supports them, preserves them, and bestows the bounties of his providence in common upon them, Acts xvii. 28. and xiv. 17. Matt. v. 45. but he bears a special love to elect men in Christ; which is called his *great love*, Eph. ii. 4. whom he has chosen and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, Eph. i. 3, 4. and which love is distinguished and discriminating, Mal. i. 1, 2. Rom. ix. 11, 12. I go on,

II. To Give some instances of the love of God, particularly to chosen men in Christ, and who share in the love of Father, Son, and Spirit.

The love of the Father has appeared in thinking of them, thoughts of peace; in contriving and forming the scheme of their peace and reconciliation in Christ, from eternity, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. in choosing them in him from the beginning, even from everlasting, to salvation, by him, 2 Thess. ii. 13. in putting their persons into the hands of Christ, and securing and preserving them in him, Deut. xxxiii. 3. Jude 1. in laying up all blessings in him for them, and blessing them with them so early, Eph. i. 3, 4. in appointing Christ to be the Saviour of them; in providing, promising, and sending him into the world, to work out their salvation, John iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9, 10. Tit. iii. 4, 5 in the pardon of their sins through the blood of Christ, Isai. xxxviii. 17. Eph. i. 7. in their adoption, 1 John iii. 1. in their regeneration and conversion, Jer. xxxi. 3. Eph. ii. 4, 5. and in the gift of eternal life unto them, Rom. vi. 23.

The love of the Son of God appears in espousing the persons of the elect, those sons of men, in whom his delights were before the world was, Prov. viii. 31. Hos. ii. 19. in becoming their Surety for good, undertaking their cause, engaging to do the will of God with that chearfulness he did; which was to work out their salvation, Psal. xl. 6—8. Heb. vii. 22. in assuming their nature, in the fulness of time, to redeem them, work out a righteousness, and make reconciliation for them, Gal. iv. 4, 5. Rom. viii. 3, 4. Heb. ii. 14, 17. by giving himself a sacrifice for them; laying down his life on their account; and shedding his blood for the cleansing of their souls, and the remission of their sins, Eph. v. 2, 25. Tit. ii. 14. 1 John iii. 16. Rev. i. 5.

The love of the Spirit, of which mention is made in Rom. xv. 30. appears in his coming into the hearts of God's elect, to convince them of sin and righteousness, and to comfort them; by shewing the grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it to them; by opening and applying the promises of it; and by shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts; by implanting every grace in them, and drawing them forth into exercise; by witnessing to their spirits their adoption; by assisting them in every duty, particularly in prayer, making intercession for them, according to the will of God; and in being the earnest, pledge, and seal of them to the day of redemption, John xvi. 7, 8. Rom. viii. 15—27, Eph. i. 13, 14.

III. It may be proper next to consider the properties of the love of God towards chosen men, which will lead more into the nature of it.

1. There is no cause of it out of God; there is no motive or inducement to it in them, no loveliness in them to excite it; all men by nature are corrupt and abominable; rather to be loathed than loved; and those that are loved, are no better than others, all being under sin; and are, "by nature, children of wrath, as others;" as deserving of that as those that are not loved, Rom. iii. 9. Eph. ii. 3. what loveliness or beauty is in saints, is owing to the righteousness of Christ, imputed to them; which is that comeliness that is put upon them, whereby they are made perfectly comely; and to the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, whereby they are all glorious within, and appear in the beauties of holiness: so that all this is the fruit of the love of God, and not the cause of it. Nor can it be any love in them to God, that is the cause of his to them; for they had no love in them when Christ died for them; nor until regenerated by the Spirit of God; and when they love him, it is because he first loved them, 1 John iv. 10, 19. and though Christ is said to love them that love him, and the Father is said to love them too; yet this must not be understood of the first love of God and Christ, unto them, nor of the first display of it; but of further and larger manifestations of it to them; and is descriptive of the persons

who are most certainly and evidently the objects of their love; but not as being the cause of it, Prov. viii. 17. John xiv. 21, 23, and xvi. 27. Nor are good works the cause of this love; for this, at least, in one instance of it, was before either good or evil were done, Rom. ix. 11, 12, and in other instances it broke forth towards them, and broke in upon them while they were yet in their sins, and before they were capable of performing good works, Rom. v. 8. Tit. iii. 3, 4. Eph. ii. 2—4. and how can it be thought, that since the best works of men are so impure and imperfect as to be reckoned as filthy rags, that these should be the cause of God's love to men? no, even faith itself is not; that "is the gift of God," and flows from electing love, and is a fruit and evidence of it, Eph. ii. 8. Acts xiii. 48. Tit. i. 1. God loves men, not because they have faith; but they have faith given them, because God loves them; it is true indeed, that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" that is, to do those things which are pleasing in his sight; but then the persons of God's elect, may be, and are, well pleasing to God, in Christ, before faith, and without it. In short, the love of God purely flows from his good will and pleasure; who "is gracious to whom he will be gracious," Exod. xxxiii. 19. it is that pure river that proceeds out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb, as an emblem of sovereignity, Rom. xxi. 1, as God loved the people of Israel because he loved them, or would love them; and for no other reason, Duet. vii. 7, 8. in like manner he loves his spiritual and mystical Israel.

. II. The love of God is eternal, it does not commence in time, it is without beginning, it is from eternity: this is evident from the love of God to Christ, which was before the foundation of the world; and with the same love he loved him, he loved his people also, and as early, John xvii. 23, 24. and from various acts of love to them in eternity, Eph. i. 4. the covenant of grace made with them, in which, grants of grace, and promises of glory were made before the world began; and Christ was set up as the Mediator of it from everlasting: all which are strong proofs of love to them, 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. Prov. viii. 22, 23.

III. The love of God is immutable, unalterable, and invariable; it is like himself, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever: and, indeed, God is love; it is his nature; it is himself; and therefore must be without any variableness, or shadow of turning. It admits of no distinctions, by which it appears to alter and vary. Some talk of a love of benevolence, by which God wishes or wills good to men; and then comes on a love of beneficence, and he does good to them, and works good in them: and then a love of complacency, and delight takes place, and not till then. But this is to make God changeable, as we are: the love of God admits of no degrees, it neither increases nor decreases; it is the same from the instant in eternity it was, without any change: it is needless to ask whether it is the same before as after conversion, since there were as great, if not greater gifts of love, bestowed on the object loved, before conversion, as after; such as the gift of God himself, in the everlasting covenant; the gift of his Son to die for them when in their sins; and the gift of the Spirit to them, in order to regenerate, quicken, and convert them; heaven itself, eternal life, is not a greater gift than these; and yet they were all before conversion. There never were any stops, lets, or impediments to this love; not the fall of Adam, nor the sad effects of it; nor the actual sins and transgressions of God's people, in a state of nature; nor all their backslidings, after called by grace; for still he loves them freely, Hos. xiv. 4. for God foreknew that they would fall in Adam, with others, that they would be transgressors from the womb, and do as evil as they could; yet this hindered not his taking up thoughts of love towards them, his choice of them, and covenant with them. Conversion makes a change in them; brings them from the power of Satan to God, from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty; from fellowship with evil men to communion with God: but it makes no change in the love of God; God changes his dispensations and dealings with them, but never changes his love; he sometimes rebukes and chastizes them, but still he loves them; he sometimes hides his face from them, but his love continues the same, Psal. lxxxix. 29—33. Isa. liv. 7—10. the manifestations of his love are various; to some they are greater, to others less; and so to the same persons, at different times; but love in his own heart is unvariable and unchangeable.

IV. The love of God endures for ever; it is an everlasting love, in that sense, Jer. xxxi. 3. it is the bond of union between God and Christ, and the elect; and it can never be dissolved; nothing can separate it, nor separate from it, Rom. viii. 35—39. The union it is the bond of, is next to that, and like it, which is between the three divine persons, John xvii. 21, 23. The union between soul and body, may be, and is dissolved, at death; but neither death nor life can separate from this; this loving kindness of God never departs; though health, and wealth, and friends, and life itself may depart, this never will, Isai. liv. 10. whatever God takes away, as all the said things may be taken away by him, he will never take away this, Psal. lxxxix. 33. having loved his own which were in the world he loves them to the end, to the end of their lives, to the end of time, and to all eternity, John xiii. 1.

OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

THIS attribute may be considered, both as it is in God himself, and as displayed in acts towards his creatures; as in himself, it is himself; it is his nature and essence; he is Grace itself, most amiable and lovely; hence so often called gracious in scripture: it is a character expressive of the amiableness and loveliness of his nature: and thus he was before he had, and would have been for ever the same if he never had displayed his grace towards any of his creatures. And this appears from the loveliness of Christ, the image of the Father, the express image of his person; who, to them that believe, is exceeding precious, and altogether lovely; when they behold his glory, as the only begotten f the Father; the fulness of grace in him, as Mediator; the purity, perfection, nd beauty of his human nature, as in union with his divine person, in which e was in high favour with God and men. Now if Christ, under these several onsiderations, is so graceful and amiable, he must needs be infinitely so, whose mage he is, and who has all virtues, all excellencies, all perfections in him; he s said to be *glorious in holiness*, Exod. xv. 11. And if he is so glorious and raceful, viewed in one perfection of his, what must he be when all put together, and he is viewed in them all, his goodness, wisdom, power, justice, truth, &c? and therefore is to be loved above all, and with all the heart, soul, and trength; and hence it is that good men, as Moses, David, and others, desired o see the face of God, so far as could be admitted, and they were capable of, Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15. Psal. xxvii. 7, 8. and cv. 4. and what a lovely sight had Moses of him in the clift of the rock, when he caused his goodness to pass, and proclaimed his name, a God gracious before him, Exod. xxxiii. 19. and xxxiv. 6. and to see the lovely face of God, so far as creatures are capable of, is the happiness of angels, and will be the happiness of saints to all eternity, Matt. xviii. 10. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. xxii. 4.

The grace of God may be considered as displayed in acts of goodness towards his creatures, especially men; and is no other than his free favour and good will to men; it is no other than love unmerited and undeserved, exercising and communicating itself to them in a free and generous manner; which they are altogether unworthy of. There are many things called grace, and the grace of God, because they flow from his grace, and are the effects of it; as the gospel, 2 Cor. vi. 1. Gal. v. 4. Tit. ii. 11. gifts for preaching the gospel, Rom. xii. 6. Eph. iii. 7, 8. the blessings of grace, as justification, adoption, &c. Psal. lxxxiv. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9. the several graces of the Spirit in regeneration, as faith, hope, love, &c. 2 Cor. ix. 8. Gal. ii. 9. but then these are to be distinguished from grace in God; as the Giver and the gift, the Fountain and the streams, the Cause and the effect. The grace of God arises from the goodness of his nature, and not from any thing in the creature; and is exercised according to his sovereign will and pleasure; *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious*, Exod. xxxiii. 19. It is independent of all merit and worth in creatures, and of all works done by them, and is always opposed to them in scripture, Rom. xi. 6. 2 Tim. i. 9. Eph. ii. 8, 9. it is quite entirely free, as Austin[u] said long ago, grace is not grace, unless it is altogether free. As an attribute, it wholly and only resides in God; and is only in men, as to the sense and perception of it, and the effects of it upon them and in them, Rom. v. 5. and viii. 38. and it is only exhibited and displayed through Christ, in and through whom men are elected, adopted, redeemed, justified, pardoned, regenerated, and sanctified, Eph. i. 4—7. Rom. iii. 24. Tit. iii. 5, 6. And though there are various gifts and blessings, and effects of it, it is but one in God; there is but one Fountain, from whence they all flow. With respect to creatures, the objects of it, some distinctions are made concerning it, as of natural and supernatural grace. Natural grace seems to sound oddly, and unless guarded against, may tend to confound nature and grace together; but rightly applied and understood, may be admitted. What Adam enjoyed, in a state of integrity, above the rest of creatures, was all owing to the unmerited kindness and goodness of God, and so may be called grace; as the image of God, in which he was created; his holiness and righteousness; his knowledge and understanding; the communion he had with God, and his dominion over the creatures; and yet it was all natural: so many things which his posterity, in their fallen state enjoy, being altogether owing to the free favour, and undeserved goodness of God, may be called grace: to have a being, and life, and the preservation of it, and the mercies of life, as food and raiment, which men are altogether unworthy of, are gifts and favours; and so may bear the name of grace, though only natural blessings. Supernatural grace includes all the blessings of grace bestowed upon any of the sons of fallen Adam; and all the graces of the Spirit wrought in them; and which will easily be allowed to be supernatural. But that Adam had any such, in a state of innocence, for my own part, I cannot see; though some are of this opinion. Again, grace is, by some, distinguished into common or general, and special or particular. Common or general grace, if it may be so called, is what all men have; as the light of nature and reason, which every man that comes into the world is enlightened with; the temporal blessings of life, the bounties of providence, called the riches of God's goodness, or grace, Rom. ii. 4. which all partake of, more or less; and the continuance and preservation of life; for "God is the Saviour of all men," 1 Tim. iv. 10. Special or particular grace, is that which is peculiar to some persons only; such as electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace, Rom. viii. 30. and this special grace is, by some, distinguished into imputed and inherent grace: imputed grace is the holiness, obedience, and righteousness of Christ imputed to justification: inherent grace is what is wrought in the heart, by the Spirit of God, in regeneration. But these distinctions, with others, only concern the effects of the grace of God; that itself is but one in God; and is sure, firm, and immutable, as his nature is; and is the efficient cause, source, and spring, of all good things enjoyed by men; and should be acknowledged, as it was by the apostle, *By the grace of God I am what I am*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. whether as a man, or as a minister, or as a christian; and this is the final cause, or ultimate end of all, that God does towards, upon, or in his elect, through Christ; all is *to the glory of his grace*, Eph. i. 6. and is what appears, shines forth, and is illustrious in every part and branch of their salvation; and therefore they are said to be *saved by grace*, Eph. ii. 5, 8. as will be evident by an enumeration of them.

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[u] Non enim Dei gratia, gratia erit ullo modo, nisi gratuita fuerit omnimodo, Aug. contra Pelag. de Peccat. Originál. l. 2. p. 338.

1. The grace of God appears in the election of men to everlasting life; and is therefore called the *election of grace*; and is denied to be of works, Rom. xi. 5. 6. and, indeed, this act of the grace of God, passed in his eternal mind,

before any works were done, good or evil, and without any consideration of them, Rom. ix. 11. nor can any works truly good be done, until men become the workmanship of God in regeneration; and then they are the fruits and effects of divine pre-ordination, Eph. ii. 10. nor were men chosen in Christ because they were holy, but that they might be holy, Eph. i. 4. And sanctification, both internal and external, is a means fixed in the decree of election; and is as absolute, unconditional, and certain, as the end, salvation, 2 Thess. ii. 13. and all the true holiness that is, has been, or will be in the world, flows from electing grace; had it not been for this, the world had been as Sodom and Gomorrah, Rom. ix. 29. Election is also irrespective of faith; that is likewise a means fixed in the decree, and most certainly follows upon it, and is therefore called the faith of God's elect, 2 Thess. ii. 13. Acts xiii. 18. Tit. i. 1. It remains, therefore, that election must be ascribed to the free favour, good will, and pleasure of God, to his unmerited grace and goodness, the true spring and cause of it; and to shew forth which is the design of it, Rom. ix. 18, 23. Eph. i. 4—6.

II. The grace of God is displayed in the covenant he has made with his elect in Christ; this, with great propriety, is commonly called by us, the covenant of grace; though the phrase is not in so many words to be met with in scripture; it is founded in the unmerited grace and mercy of God; and is made to establish and secure the glory of it, Psal. lxxxix. 2, 3. It was free grace that moved God to make one, to which he was not otherwise obliged: it was free grace that called, and that moved Christ to engage with his Father in it, and which gave him to be the covenant of the people, Psal. xl. 6, 7. Isai. xlii. 6. it was free grace that stored it with all spiritual blessings; by which it appears to be ordered in all things for the glory of God, and the good of his covenant-people; and these are grants of grace, made in it to them in Christ, 2 Tim. i. 9. and it was free grace that filled it with exceeding great and precious promises; promises of grace and glory, made before the world began; and which made them sure by an oath to the heirs of them; and who become heirs of them, not through any merit of theirs, but through the undeserved favour of God towards them.

III. The grace of God is very manifest in the adoption of the chosen ones; the cause of which is, the good pleasure of the will of God; and the end of it, the glory of his grace, Eph. i. 5, 6. God, the adopter, stood not in any need of sons; he had a Son, an only begotten Son, a beloved Son, the dear Son of his love, who always pleased him, his Son and Heir; the adopted are altogether unworthy of such a favour, being "by nature children of wrath, as others;" and these men, and not angels, who are only servants in the family, to wait upon the children, the heirs of salvation, and minister unto them: and not all the race of men, only some, and these no better in themselves than others; and therefore their adoption cannot be ascribed to any thing else but the free and distinguishing grace of God; and into which relation they were taken before time, in the everlasting covenant; and Christ was sent to open the way, that they might receive this blessing of grace, and which they do by faith, the gift of God; for faith does not make them, only manifests them to be the sons of God; which relation is the ground of their having the Spirit, faith, and every other grace, Gal. iv. 4—6.

IV. The grace of God shines very illustrious in redemption by Jesus Christ; free grace set infinite wisdom to work, to find out a proper person to be the redeemer and saviour; and it found out Christ to be the ransom, and provided him to be the sacrifice, Job xxxiii. 24. his incarnation was owing to God's good will to men, Luke ii. 14. and his mission to his unmerited love, 1 John iv. 10. and it was by the grace of God he tasted death for men, Heb. ii. 9. and this for sinners, the chief of sinners, ungodly men, enemies in their minds by wicked works. In short, all that are redeemed and saved, whether Old or New Testament-saints, are saved by the grace of God and Christ, Acts xv. 11.

V. The grace of God is very conspicuous in the justification of men before God, and acceptance with him; which, in the strongest terms, is said to be of grace, to be by his grace, the grace of God, and freely by his grace, and that through the redemption that is in Christ, Tit. iii. 7. Rom. iii. 24. Free grace, by infinite wisdom, found out the way whereby sinful men might be just with God; which otherwise never could have been; namely, by not imputing their trespasses to them, but to Christ, the Surety free grace provided, whereby "God is just, and yet the justifier of him that believes in Jesus," 2 Cor. v. 19. Rom. iii. 25, 26. free grace appears in appointing Christ to work out, and bring in everlasting righteousness; and in sending him in the likeness of sinful flesh to do it, Dan. ix. 24. Rom. viii. 3, 4. and it was free grace moved Christ to come to do this will of God, and "become the end of the law for righteousness;" and it was free grace in God the Father to accept of this righteousness, in the room and stead of sinners, and to impute it, without works, unto them, as their justifying righteousness; and in appointing faith to be the recipient of it, that so it might clearly appear to be of grace; as the persons who are justified by it, being in themselves ungodly, more clearly shews it, Rom. iv. 5, 6, 16. Justification is always denied to be of works; and the righteousness by which men are justified, is represented as a gift, a free gift, a gift by grace, as faith that receives it also is, Rom. iii. 20, 28. and v. 15—17. Eph. ii. 8.

VI. Pardon of sin is according to the riches, fulness, and freeness of the grace of God, Eph. i. 7. the promise of it in the covenant is free, absolute, and unconditional, Heb. viii. 12. the proclamation of it in the gospel, bore witness to by all the prophets is the same, Exod. xxxiv. 6. Acts x. 43. and xiii. 38. the blood of Christ was shed freely for it; and though it cost him dear, it is all of free grace to sinners, without money and without price. Christ is exalted as a prince to give it; and God, for Christ's sake, frankly forgives all trespasses, Acts v. 31. Luke vii. 41, 42. Col. ii. 13. and it is vouchsafed to the worst and chief of sinners, 1 Tim. i. 13. and to great backsliders, ungrateful persons, guilty of sins of omission and commission, Hos. xiv. 4. Isai. xliii. 22—25.

VII. The grace of God is abundantly evident in regeneration, vocation and sanctification; God regenerates men by his grace, and of his own good will and pleasure, James i. 18. and he calls them by his grace, and according to it, Gal. i. 15. 2 Tim. i. 9. and which always becomes effectual. There are some things which bear the name of grace, which fall short of true sanctifying grace, at least what men call so, as restraining grace; whereby some of God's people, before conversion, and some others, are kept from the commission of gross sins others fall into; and external gifts of grace, as a rational knowledge of the gospel, historical faith, and even gifts for the public ministry; which persons may have, and yet be unknown by Christ, and be cast-aways. Also what some call sufficient grace, though wrongly; rather it should be called, insufficient; for that can never be sufficient which is ineffectual; as the means of grace often are. There are other distinctions of grace, which are not very material, yet, if rightly explained and understood, may be allowed, as grace preparing, preventing, operating, and co-operating, and subsequent. Preparing grace must be understood not of preparations, and previous dispositions in men, and of them, to the grace of God; but what is of God himself, who prepares the heart, and makes it, by his grace, good ground, fit to receive the seed of the word cast into it, where it becomes the ingrafted word, Prov. xvi. 1. Matt. xiii. 23. Preventing grace is that in which God goes beforehand with men, and enlightens their minds, teaches and instructs them in the knowledge of themselves and of Christ, and guides, directs, and draws them to him, John vi. 44, 45. Operating grace is that by which God works in men, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure, Phil. ii. 13. Co-operating grace is that by which men act, being acted or wrought upon, and by which they run, being drawn. Cant. i. 4. Subsequent grace is that by which the work of grace is carried on, and performed until the day of Christ, Phil. i. 6. Though there seems to be no great need of these distinctions; the most proper epithet of the grace of God, as displayed in regeneration, vocation, and conversion, is, that it is efficacious; it never fails of its effects: and it is always persevering grace, and is never lost or comes to nothing; but issues in everlasting salvation; and all is owing to unmerited goodness. Every grace implanted in regeneration, flows from the free favour and good will of God. Faith is a gift, a free-grace-gift, a distinguished gift; not given to all men, only to whom the Lord pleases, Eph. ii. 8. 2 Thess. iii. 2. Repentance is a grant of God's grace, a gift of Christ, and a blessing of the covenant, Acts v. 31. and xi. 18. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Hope is a good hope through grace; what men, in a state of nature, are without; and which God, of his free grace, gives, 2 Thess. ii. 16. The same may be said of every other grace, love, humility, patience, &c.

VIII. Eternal life is the free gift of God, through Christ, a free-grace-gift through him, Rom. vi. 23. The introduction of all the Lord's people into the enjoyment of it, will be attended with shouts and acclamations, crying *grace, grace, unto it!* Zech. iv. 7. and which will be the employment of saints to all eternity; and so the great and ultimate end of God in their salvation, will be answered, namely, *the glory of his grace*, Eph. i. 6.

OF THE MERCY OF GOD.

THE Mercy of God differs, in some respects, both from the love and grace of God; from the love of God in its objects, and order of operation: in its objects; which, though the same, are regarded under different considerations. Love pitched itself originally on objects, in the pure mass of creatureship, as unfallen, though it continues with them in their fallen state, and through all the imperfections of this life, to eternal happiness; mercy supposes its objects miserable, and so fallen: in order of operation; for though they are together in God, the one as early as the other, yet love seems to work by mercy, and mercy from it; the objects being viewed as dead in sin, and for it, love stirs up mercy to quicken them with Christ, and in themselves; *God who is rich in mercy, for the great love*, &c. Eph. ii. 4, 5. Mercy also differs from grace; for though all mercy is grace, because it is free, unmerritted, undeserved; yet all grace is not mercy[w]: much grace and favour are shewn to the elect angels; in the choice of them in Christ; in the preservation of them from the apostacy others of their species fell into; in constituting Christ the head of them, by whose grace they are confirmed in the state in which they were created; and in their being indulged with the presence of God, and communion with him; they always beholding his face in heaven; all which is abundant grace, but not mercy; since they never were miserable, and so not objects of mercy. The things to be considered respecting this attribute, are,

I. The properties of it, which will lead more clearly into its nature, and the knowledge of it.

1. Mercy is natural and essential to God; yea, it is his nature and essence: hence he is often described as *merciful*, Exod. xxxiv. 6. Neh. ix. 17. Psal. cxvi. 5. indeed it is not to be considered as a passion, or affection in God, as it is in men; attended with grief and sorrow, with anguish and anxiety of mind for the party in misery; which become the more vehement, the nearer the relation is, and the stronger the love and affection is, bore to the object. Hence the stoic philosophers[x], denied mercy to belong to good men, and so not to God; and, indeed, it does not, in such sense, unless by an anthropopathy, or speaking after the manner of men; since he is free from all passion and perturbation

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[w] Vid. Maccov. Theolog. Quæst. loc. 13. p. 82.

[x] Zeno apud Cicero. Orat. 23. pro Muræna, Laert. in Vita ejus, l. 7. p. 522. Seneca de Clementia, l. 2. c. 4, 5, 6.

of mind. The Latin word Misericordia, signifies, as Zanchius[y] observes, having another's misery at heart; but not a miserable heart, or one made so by the misery of another, especially as applied to God; with whom it is no other than a propensity of his will to succour persons in distress, whether in a temporal or spiritual way; and this is as essential to him as is his goodness; of which it is a branch: and therefore as God is essentially, originally, independently, and underivatively good, so is he in like manner merciful. This is one of the perfections which are in some measure imitable by creatures; *Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful,* Luke vi. 36. The Socinians[z], deny that mercy is essential to God, supposing that mercy and justice are opposite, whereas they are not, not even in men; a man may be just, and yet merciful, merciful and yet just: and not caring to allow justice to be essential to God, which they think they must grant, if mercy is; which would establish the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, and make that necessary which they do not chuse to embrace. But though mercy is natural and essential to God, it is not naturally and necessarily bore towards, and exercised on every object in misery: for then all would share in it, that are in misery, even all wicked men and devils, whereas it is certain they do not; but it is guided in the exercise of it by the love of God; and is governed and influenced by his sovereign will; who *hath mercy on whom he will have mercy,* Rom. ix. 15, 18. just as omnipotence is essential to God, but is not necessarily put forth to do every thing it could; but is directed and guided by the will of God; who does whatsoever he pleases.

II. Mercy being essential to God, or his nature and essence, nothing out of himself can be the cause of it; for then there would be a cause prior to him, the Cause of himself, and that would be God, and not he: the misery of a creature is not the cause of mercy in God; who is not to be moved and wrought upon as creatures are; being a most simple act, and having no passive power to work upon; besides, was this the case, all must partake of mercy, since all are miserable; which they do not; see Isai. xxvii. 11. nor are the merits of the creature, or works of righteousness, the cause of mercy; these are opposed to each other in the business of salvation, Tit. iii. 5. nor are those to whom mercy is shewn, more deserving than those to whom it is not; and oftentimes less deserving, or more vile and sinful; see Rom. iii. 9. Eph. ii. 3. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 1 Tim. i. 13. Nor are even the merits of Christ, or his obedience, sufferings, and death, the cause of mercy in God; for they are the fruits and effects of it, and flow from it; it is *through the tender mercy of our God, that the day-spring from on high hath visited us,* Luke i. 78. that is, it is owing to mercy, that Christ, who is meant by the day-spring from on high, became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, and died, in our room and stead, and wrought out salvation for us. The mercy of God arises from the goodness of his nature, from his special love to his people, and from his sovereign will and pleasure; who, as he loves whom he pleases, and "is gracious to whom he will be gracious;" so "he has mercy on whom he will have mercy," Exod. xxxiii. 19.

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[y] Natura Dei, l. 4. c. 4. p. 372.

[z] Socinus de Servatore, l. 1. par. 1. c. 1. Prælectiones, c. 16. Racov. Catechism. c. 8. qu. 20.

III. The mercy of God is infinite: as his nature is infinite, so are each of his attributes. His *understanding is infinite,* Psal. cxlvii. 5. and so his knowledge, wisdom, justice, holiness, and goodness, and likewise his mercy; it is so in its nature and in its effects; and this appears both by bestowing an infinite good on men, which is Christ, who is the gift of God, and owing to the love, grace, and mercy of God; and who though, as man, is finite; yet, in his divine person, infinite; and as such given, Isai. ix. 6. and by his delivering them from an infinite evil, sin: sin, as an act of the creature, is finite; but objectively, infinite, as it is committed against God, the infinite Being, Psal. li. 4. and therefore is not only infinite with respect to number, Job xxii. 5. but with respect to its object, and also with respect to punishment for it; the demerit of it is eternal death; and this cannot be endured at once, or answered for in a short time; it is carried on *ad infinitum,* without end; and therefore spoken of as everlasting and eternal. Now mercy has provided for the forgiveness of sin, and for the deliverance of men from the punishment of it, and from being liable to it, Heb. viii. 12.

IV. The mercy of God is eternal; the eternity of mercy is expressed in the same language as the eternity of God himself; and, indeed, since it is his nature, it must be as eternal as he himself is; see Psal. xc. 2. and ciii. 17. it is from everlasting, as his love is; which is to be proved by the instances of it, called his tender mercies, which have been ever of old, or from everlasting, Psal. xxv. 6. the council and covenant of peace were in eternity; in which the scheme of reconciliation to God was formed, and the method of it settled, which supposed them enemies, and so considered them as fallen creatures, and objects of mercy: and, indeed, the covenant of grace, which was from everlasting, is a superstructure of mercy, Psal. lxxxix. 1—3. and since mercy is from everlasting, not any thing in time can be the cause of it; not the misery of the creature, by the fall of Adam, nor works of righteousness done after conversion; nor the obedience and sufferings of Christ; things in time: and the mercy of God is to everlasting, in its fruits and effects; it is kept with Christ, and for him, the Mediator of the covenant; into whose hands are put all the promises and blessings of mercy; called, therefore, *the sure mercies of David,* Psal. lxxxix. 24, 28. Isai. lv. 3. even temporal blessings, which flow from the mercy of God, are new every morning, and are daily continued; and spiritual ones always remain; the mercy of God never departs from his people, notwithstanding their backslidings; and though he chides them for them, and hides his face from them, yet still he has mercy on them, Psal. lxxxix. 30—33. Isai. liv. 6—10. Jer. iii. 12, 14.

V The mercy of God is immutable, as he himself is, and his love also; and therefore the objects of it are not consumed, Mal. iii. 6. it is invariably the same in every state and condition into which they come; it is, as the virgin Mary expresses it, from generation to generation, without any variation or change, Luke i. 50.

VI. It is common to all the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; for as their is one common undivided essence, of which each equally partakes, the same divine perfections and attributes belong to them, and so this of mercy: mercy is ascribed to the God and Father of Christ, 1 Peter i. 3. and to our Lord Jesus Christ; not only as Man, and Mediator, but as the true God, and eternal life; to whose mercy we are to look for it, Jude 21. and to the blessed Spirit, who helps the infirmities of the saints, "and makes intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered, Rom. viii. 26.

VII. Mercy is displayed only in and through Christ; God out of Christ is a consuming fire; it is only in him God proclaims his name, "a God gracious and merciful;" he is the mercy-seat, and throne of grace, at which men obtain mercy and find grace; he is the channel through which it flows, and through whom it, in its effects, is conveyed to the sons of men: they are right who cast themselves not on the absolute mercy of God out of Christ; but upon his mercy, as displayed in him, as the publican did, Luke xviii. 13. In a word, it is represented as great, large, and ample, and very abundant; we read of a multitude of tender mercies; and God is said to be rich and plenteous in it; as will appear more fully by considering the objects and instances of it, Psal. ciii. 11. and li. 1. 1 Pet. i. 3. Eph. ii. 4. Psal. lxxxvi 5.

II. The objects of mercy may be next observed: and that this may appear in a plain and clear light, it will be proper to remark, that the mercy of God is general and special: with respect to the general mercy of God, all creatures are the objects of it; *the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 9. there is not a creature in all the earth but partakes of it; hence says the Psalmist, *The earth, O Lord is full of thy mercy!* Psal. cxix. 64. even the brute creation, the mute animals, share in it; it is owing to mercy that they are preserved in their beings, Psal. xxxvi. 5. 6. and that a provision of food is made for their sustenance; and who sometimes are in great distress, and when they cry to God he gives them their food, Joel i. 18, 20. Psal. civ. 27, 28. and cxlvii. 9. Job xxxviii. 41. All men, good and bad, partake of the providential goodness and mercy of God; he is kind to the unthankful and unholy, and makes the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust, Luke vi. 35. Matt. v. 45. He preserves and supports all men in their beings, and so is the Saviour of all; and especially of them that believe, 1 Tim. iv. 10. and gives them the necessaries of life, food and raiment, and all things richly to enjoy, both for convenience and pleasure: yea, even the devils themselves partake of mercy, in some sense; for though God has not spared them, so as to save them, and not condemn them; yet he has given them a kind of reprieve, and reserved them to the judgment of the great day; so that they are not yet in full torments, as their sins have deserved; and as God punishes none more, but less than their sins require, this may be reasonably supposed to be the case of devils, even hereafter.

As to the special mercy of God, none are the objects of that but elect men, who are called *vessels of mercy*, Rom. ix. 23. because they are filled with it, even with all spiritual blessings, which flow from it, and which are bestowed on them according as they are chosen in Christ, Eph. i. 3, 4. and so particularly regeneration, which is according to the abundant mercy of God, they are favoured with, being the elect of God, 1 Pet. i. 2, 3. and these, as they are redeemed by Christ, share in the special mercy and goodness of God; and therefore are under obligation to say, with wonder and thankfulness, "the Lord is good; and his mercy endures for ever," Psal. cvii. 1, 2. and especially, being effectually called by the grace of God, they appear to be the objects of mercy; then they who had not obtained mercy, did not know their interest in it, nor actually enjoyed the blessings of it, now have obtained mercy; are blessed both with knowledge of interest in it, and with the open possession of the blessings of it, 1 Pet. ii. 10. These are described sometimes by them that call upon the Lord, to whom he is plenteous in mercy, Psal. lxxxvi. 5. by "them that love him, and keep his commandments; to whom he shews his mercy," Exod. xx. 6. Nehem. i. 5. Dan. ix. 4. and by them that fear him, and towards whom his mercy always is, Psal. ciii. 11—17. Not that calling upon God, love to him, and observance of his commands, and the fear of him, are the causes of his mercy to them, since that is prior to all these, and is the cause of them; but these describe the persons who openly, and manifestly, share in the mercy of God, and to whom the effects of it have been applied, and who may expect a continuance of it, and larger discoveries and displays thereof to be made unto them; as well as they shew that the mercy of God is special and distinguishing, and yet that it is not limited to any family or nation, but is enjoyed by all that love and fear the Lord in every nation, Acts x. 34, 35.

III. The instances of mercy, to the objects of it, are many and various.

1. It appears in election: it is, indeed, a controversy among divines, whether election is an act of love or of mercy: I am inclined to be of the opinion of those who take it to be an act of love, and not mercy; as God chose literal Israel, because he loved them, Deut. vii. 7, 8. so spiritual Israel are first beloved, and then chosen, 2 Thess. ii. 13. *electio præsupponit dilectionem*; but then, though the decree of election flows from love, and not mercy; yet God has in it decreed to shew mercy; he has resolved within himself, saying, I will have mercy, and will save; and therefore in this decree he has appointed them not unto wrath, which they deserve, but to obtain salvation by Christ; which supposes them fallen creatures, and so objects of mercy: for the decree of election, may be distinguished into the decree of the end, and the decree of the means: with respect to the end, the glory of God, men were considered as unfallen, in the pure mass out of which God designed to make them for himself: but with respect to the means, redemption by Christ, and faith in him, the Redeemer, and sancti-

cation of the Spirit; here they were considered as fallen creatures; and so, with propriety, those chosen ones may be called vessels of mercy.

II. The covenant of grace is a display of the mercy of God, as before observed; it is built upon mercy, and built up with it; it is stored with it, and is full of it. Mercy called Christ to engage in it, and set him up as the Mediator of it, and prevented him with the blessings of goodness: the provisions of Christ, as a Redeemer and Saviour in it; of forgiveness of sins through his blood; and of reconciliation and atonement by his sacrifice; and of regeneration and sanctification by his Spirit, are so many displays of mercy.

III. Redemption itself is a glaring instance of the mercy of God. Mercy resolved upon the redemption and salvation of the elect; being viewed as fallen in Adam, and as sinners, mercy provided a Redeemer and Saviour of them, and laid their help upon him; and mercy called Christ to undertake the work of redemption, and engaged him in it; mercy sent him, in the fulness of time, to visit them, and perform it; mercy delivered him up into the hands of justice and death, in order to obtain it, and it is most illustriously glorified in it; *mercy and truth have met together,* Psalm. lxxxv. 10. yea, Christ himself, in his love and pity, has redeemed his people, Isai. lxiii. 9.

IV. The forgiveness of sin is another instance of the mercy of God, to which it is frequently ascribed, Psal. li. 1. Dan. ix. 9. Luke i. 77, 78. God has promised it in covenant, as the effect of his mercy; *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,* Heb. viii. 12. He has set forth Christ, in his purposes, to be the propitiation for the remission of sins; and has sent him, in time, to shed his blood for it, Rom. iii. 25. and it is the mercy of God, which is the foundation of hope of it; and encourages sensible sinners to ask, and through which they obtain it, Psalm. cxxx. 7. Luke xviii. 13. 1 Tim. i. 13.

V. The mercy of God is displayed in regeneration, to which that is ascribed in 1 Pet. i. 3. and it is wonderful and special mercy, to quicken a sinner dead in trespasses and sins; to enlighten such that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; to deliver from the bondage of Satan, those that are led captive by him at his will; to snatch them as brands out of the burning, and save from everlasting fire; to bring men out of a pit, wherein there was no water, no relief and comfort, and in which they must otherwise die; and to reveal Christ to them, and in them, the hope of glory; and give them a good hope, through grace, of being for ever happy. These are some of the great and good things which God does for his people in effectual vocation, having compassion on them.

VI. Compleat salvation, and eternal life itself, flow from the mercy of God; he saves, "not by works of righteousness, but according to his mercy," Tit. iii. 5. and when he shall put his people into the full possession of salvation, then they shall find and obtain mercy in that day, even in the day of judgment, when they shall go into life eternal; and therefore are now directed to look unto the mercy of Christ for it, 2 Tim. i. 18. Jude 21.

OF THE LONG-SUFFERING OF GOD.

THE Long-Suffering of God, the same with his forbearance and patience, arises from his mercy, is a display of it, or is one way in which mercy shews itself; and so, by the Cabalistic Jews, it is said to belong to the predicament of *Chesed*, or mercy, as they express themselves[a]; and it may be observed, that wherever God is said to be long-suffering, he is represented as gracious and merciful, or as of great mercy and kindness; and by this attribute, as by them and with them, he is pleased to describe and make known himself, for the encouragement of faith and hope in him, Exod. xxxiv. 6. Numb. xiv. 18. Psal. lxxxvi. 15. and therefore the consideration of it very properly follows that of mercy. The Hebrew word ארך אפים which literally signifies long of both nostrils, is sometimes rendered long-suffering, as in the places referred to; and sometimes *slow to anger*, Nehem. ix. 17. Psal. ciii. 8. and to which the Greek word *μακροθυμειν*, and *μακροθυμια*, in the New Testament, answer, Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15. the allusion is to the nose, the seat of anger, which restrains or shews it, as it is long or contracted.

God is sometimes called, *the God of patience*, Rom. xv. 5. not only because he is the author and object of the grace of patience, and that is grateful to him; but because he is patient, or long-suffering in himself, and towards his creatures, and is a pattern of patience to them; for this is one of the attributes of God, in which he may in some measure be imitated; see Eph. iv. 1, 2. Col. iii. 12. This is not to be considered as a quality, accident, passion, or affection in God, as in creatures; who bear with patience things grievous, distressing, and torturing to them, Col. i. 11. but it is the very nature and essence of God, which is free from all passion and perturbation, from all suffering, grief, and pain; it springs from his goodness, and is as essential to him as that, and is joined with it, Rom. ii. 4. it is no other than a moderation of his anger, a restraint of that, a deferring the effects of it, at least for a while, according to his sovereign will; it is an extension and prolongation of mercy for a season; for mercy is always in it and with it; and in this it differs from it, that the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting; but the long-suffering of God, as to the exercise of it, is only for a time, until some certain end is answered, and in which it issues; either in the damnation and destruction of the wicked, when they are fitted for it, Rom. ix. 22. or in the salvation of God's elect, 2 Pet. iii. 15. for it is exercised towards both, till each take place; which will be distinctly considered.

I. The long-suffering of God is exercised towards his chosen people, they are the us towards whom he is said to be *long-suffering*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. even who are called beloved, 8. not only beloved of the apostle, and by one another, but by the Lord; and the elect according to the fore-knowledge of God, 1 Pet. i. 2.

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[a] Lexic. Cabalist. p. 155.

for to the same persons are both epistles written; and therefore being the beloved and chosen of God; it was his will that none of them should perish, but come to repentance; even all of the same character, and of the same company and society, the whole election of grace; and until every one of these are called and brought to repentance, God is, and will be, long-suffering towards them; and long-suffering to the world for their sakes; wherefore Christ's not coming to judgment sooner than he will, is not owing to any negligence, dilatoriness, or slackness in God, concerning the promise of it, but to the long-suffering of God; which has been eminently displayed with respect to the people of God.

I. In the saints of the Old Testament dispensation, which time is expressly called *the forbearance of God*, Rom. iii. 25. The case stood thus; Christ became the Surety for them in eternity, engaged to assume their nature, pay their debts, and make satisfaction for their sins: this was notified immediately after the fall of Adam, Gen. iii. 15. but it was four thousand years from thence to the time fixed in Daniel's prophecy, "to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness;" to the fulness of time when Christ should come to redeem all his people, and particularly, to obtain the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament, Dan. ix. 24. Gal. iv. 4. Heb. ix. 15. Now all this time was a time of patience, forbearance, and long-suffering with God, in respect to his people under this dispensation; he did not stir up his wrath, and execute it on them; but reserved it for his Son, their Surety; he forbore to inflict the punishment on them their sins deserved; he did not impute sin to them, place it to their account, charge it on them, and demand of them satisfaction for it; but placed it to his Son's account, and expected satisfaction from him; he accepted of the sacrifices of slain beasts, as vicarious ones in their stead, though they had no true value, nor real efficacy in them, to atone for sin; only were typical of Christ's sacrifice; and were to continue, and did, until that should be offered up; God waited till he should come and make his soul an offering for sin; and, upon his credit, bore with them, and bestowed the blessings of his grace on them: they were justified by him on the foot of Christ's righteousness to be wrought out; and their sins pardoned, through his atoning sacrifice to be offered up; they were saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, even as we are, and we as they; they were carried to heaven, and glorified, before the payment of their debts were made by their Surety, before satisfaction for their sins was given to justice, and before the actual redemption of them was obtained. All which, as it shews the trust and confidence God put in his Son, so his forbearance and long-suffering towards Old Testament-saints; which also has appeared, and does appear,

II. In and towards every one of his people in their state of unregeneracy, in every age and period of time, or of whatsoever nation, or under whatsoever dispensation they be; the Lord bears with them, whilst in a state of nature, and waits patiently all that while, to be gracious to them, Isai. xxx. 18. There-was much grace in his heart, in his Son, and in his covenant, laid up for them. This is abundantly displayed in conversion, when there is an abounding and a superabounding of it. But then the vocation and conversion of them is according to purpose; and as there is a time for every purpose, for the execution of it, so for this; and till that time comes, the Lord waits, forbears, suffers much and long; he does not cut them off in their sins, as they deserve; but saves them, and sometimes from very imminent dangers, to be called, 2 Tim. i. 9. and with some he bears and waits a long time, who are called at the ninth and eleventh hours, and, as the thief on the cross, at the last day and hour of his life; and he waits, as it were, in a longing manner; speaking after the manner of men, *When will it once be?* Jer. xiii. 27.

III. The apostle Paul is a remarkable instance of God's long-suffering; which was exercised towards him throughout all his blasphemy of Christ, his persecution of his people, and the injuries he did unto them; he waited, through all, to be gracious to him; his eye was upon him, and his heart was towards him; and hence such notice is taken of him in that state, before the account is given of his vocation; see Acts vii. 58. and viii. 1, 3. and ix. 1. yea, he himself says, *For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him, to life everlasting,* 1 Tim. i. 16. meaning the people of the Jews, in the latter day: his sense seems to be this, that as Christ bore much, and exercised great long-suffering towards him, and at last shewed him mercy; so he would bear with, and shew much long-suffering to the people of the Jews, of which that towards him was a pattern, and which should issue in their salvation, as it had in his; when *all Israel shall be saved,* Rom. xi. 25. God's long-suffering towards them is very great and very remarkable; as it was towards him; though they are under the marks of his displeasure, he has not stirred up all his wrath, so as to cut them off from being a people; but has reserved them for future times, and good things for them, and waits to be gracious to them.

II. The long-suffering of God is exercised towards the ungodly, even towards the vessels of wrath, whom he endures with much long-suffering, till they are *fitted to destruction*, Rom. ix. 22. and this appears by his supporting them in their beings, notwithstanding their grievous provocations of him; which are such, that it is amazing he does not at once strike them dead, as he did Ananias and Sapphira; or that the earth does not at once open and swallow them up, as it did Dathan and Abiram. This can be attributed to nothing else but to his patience, forbearance, and long-suffering: and by the multitude of his mercies bestowed upon them, who have many of them, more than other men; and which are called *the riches of his goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering*; see Job xxi. 7—13. Psal. lxxiii. 4—7. Rom. ii. 4. and by granting to many of them the outward means of grace, which are despised and rejected by them; and by deferring his judgments on them; which, because they are not speedily executed, their hearts are set in them to do evil; they are more and more hardened, and pro-

[illegible] themselves iniquity is full. Now the ends of God's thus dealing with them, are partly for his own glory; to shew his wrath, and make his power known; to vindicate him from all cruelty and injustice, when he righteously executes his wrath, and exerts his power in their destruction: as in the instance of Pharaoh, Rom. ix. 17, 22. and partly for the sake of his own people who dwell among them, that they may not suffer with them; thus he would have spared Sodom, had there been ten righteous men in it, for their sakes; and he forbears to take vengeance on those that have shed the blood of his saints, until the number of his elect, in like manner, is fulfilled; and he spares a wicked world from being burnt up and destroyed, until all his chosen ones are brought to repentance, Gen. xviii. 32. Rev. vi. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 9. and another end is for themselves, that they may be rendered inexcusable, and the execution of wrath on them may appear just and righteous, Rom. ii. 1—5.

There are many instances of the patience, forbearance, and long-suffering of God, with respect to the wicked; as in the men of the old world, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, 1 Pet. iii. 20. see Gen. vi. 3. and in the inhabitants of Sodom, daring sinners, who had first hints of God's displeasure, yet had mercy shewn them, a respite for a while, and then destroyed by fire from heaven, Gen. xiii. 13. and xiv. 11, 21. and xviii. 21. and xix. 24. in Pharaoh, refusing to let Israel go, whom God had spared some time, beginning with lighter judgments, then executed heavier ones, and at last drowned him and his host in the red sea, Exod. v. 2. and vii. &c. and xiv. 17—28. in the people of Israel, in the wilderness, whose manners God suffered and bore with, and was grieved with them forty years, Acts xiii. 18. in the Amorites and Canaanites, until their sin was full, and till the land itself would bear them no longer, but spewed them out of it, Gen. xv. 16. Lev. xviii. 28. in the Gentile world, during their times of ignorance, Acts xvii. 30. in fruitless professors of religion, signified by the barren fig-tree, Luke xiii. 6—9. and in antichrist, during the time of his reign, and no longer. Rev. ii. 21. and xiii. 5. and xviii. 8.

OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

Having treated of the love, grace, mercy, and long-suffering of God, it will be proper to take some notice of his goodness, from whence they all proceed; for that God loves any of his creatures, in the manner he does, bestows favours upon them, shews mercy to them, and bears much with them, is owing to the goodness of his nature. Hence one of his names and titles by which he is described and made known is, that of Good; *thou, Lord, art good*, Psal. lxxxvi. 5. and in many other places; when God proclaimed his name before Moses, this was one part of it, *abundant in goodness*, Exod. xxxiv. 6. Philo says[a], God is the name of goodness. And our English word God seems to be a contraction of the word Good; or, however, is the same with the German, Gott and Godt; which came as is thought[c], from the Arabic word Gada, which so signified; so that the German and English name of the divine Being, in common use, is taken from the attribute of his goodness. The name the heathens give to their supreme deity, is *optimus*[d], the best; he being not only good, as they supposed, and better than others, but the best of beings. Our Jehovah, the true God, is superlatively good; good in the highest degree, good beyond all conception and expression. Cotta in Cicero[e], charges Epicurus, with taking away from God the property of the best and most excellent nature, by denying the grace and goodness of God; for what, says he, is better, or what is more excellent, than goodness and beneficence? It is a common notion, Sallustius says[f], that God is good; and Simplicius[g] calls him, the Goodness of goodnesses. Concerning the goodness of God, let the following things be observed:

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[a] Leg. Alleg. l. 2. p. 94.

I. Goodness is essential to God; without which he would not be God; he is by nature good[h]. The evil god of Cerdon and Marcion, is not the true God; and this being wanting in heathen deities, whatever pretensions may be made unto it, excludes them from the claim of deity; yea, goodness is itself the nature and essence of God; as he is love itself, wisdom itself, &c. so he is goodness itself, and it is himself, it includes his whole nature and essence. When God promised Moses that he would make all his goodness pass before him, it was not a single attribute only, which was proclaimed and made known; but the several attributes of mercy, grace, long-suffering, truth, faithfulness, justice, and holiness, Exod. xxxiii. 19. and xxxiv. 6, 7. The goodness of God is not distinct from his essence; for then he must be compounded of that, and his essence; which is contrary to his simplicity: he is good in and of himself, and by his own essence; and not by participation of another; for if he was not good of himself, and by his own essence; but of and by another; then there would be some being both better than him, and prior to him; and so he would not be the eternal God, nor an independent Being, since he must depend on that from whence he receives his goodness; nor would he be the most perfect being, since what communicates goodness to him, must be more perfect than he: all which, to say of God, is very unbecoming. It remains, then, that he is essentially good; is so in and of himself, by his own nature and essence.

II. Goodness only belongs to God; he is solely good; *There is none good but one; that is, God*; is the assertion of Christ, Matt. xix. 17. which is to be understood not to the exclusion of the Son, and Spirit of God, who are, with the Father, the one God; and so equally good: but with respect to creatures, who are not of themselves inderivatively and independently good; this is only true of God. Whatever goodness is in creatures, it is all from him, who made them good originally; or put into them, or bestowed upon them, what goodness they have: what goodness there is in the elect angels, who never sinned; what goodness was in Adam, in a state of innocence; what goodness is in any good man, who partakes of the grace of God, or is or will be in the saints in heaven, is all from God; every good and perfect gift comes from him; nor have creatures any thing but what they receive from him; he is the source and fountain of all, and therefore all goodness, originally, ultimately, and solely, is to be referred to God.

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[c] Vid. Hinckelman. Præfat. ad Alkoran. [d] Optimus maximus quidem ante optimus, id est, beneficentissimus quam maximus, Cicero de Natura Deorum, l. 2. [e] Ibid. l. 1. prope finem. [f] De Diis, c. 1. [g] In Epictetum. [h] αγαθος γαρ τη φυσει, Hierocles in Carmin. Pythag. p. 22.

III. God is the *summum bonum*, he is *τ' αγαθον*, as Plato calls him the Good[1]; the chiefest good; the sum and substance of all felicity. Unwearied have been the pursuits of men to attain this; but have always failed, when they place it or expect it in any thing out of God, and short of him: innumerable have been the sentiments of men about it. Solomon seems to have reduced them to these three, wisdom, riches, and pleasure; and he made an experiment of them, what happiness could be enjoyed in them, as far as a king, a wise man, and a good man, could go; and when he had finished it, pronounced all vanity and vexation of spirit. God only can make men happy; he is the Father of mercies, the Fountain of all goodness, the Source of all felicity. There may be a shew of happiness in such and such outward circumstances of life, some may be in, with respect to the above things; but there is no solidity in them; he is the only happy man *whose God is the Lord*, Psal. cxliv. 12—15. wherefore good men, who are sensible of the vanity of the creature, and all creature-enjoyments, pant after him, and are importunately desirous of the enjoyment of him, and cannot be satisfied without him, placing all their happiness in him: whilst others are saying, Who will shew us any good? taking up their contentment in worldly good; they say, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*; which gives the greatest pleasure, joy, and satisfaction, that can be had, Psal. iv. 6, 7. and xlii. 1. and lxxiii. 25.

IV There is nothing but goodness in God, and nothing but goodness comes from him; there is no iniquity in him, nothing evil in his nature, no unrighteousness in any of his ways and works; he is light itself; all purity, holiness, truth, and goodnes; and in him is no darkness at all, of sin, error, and ignorance, 1 John i. 5. nor does any thing that is evil come from him; he is not the author of sin, nor does he impel, nor persuade to it, nor tempt with it; but strongly forbids it, under pain of his displeasure, James i. 13, 14. indeed, his decree is concerned about it; for it could not be, he not willing it by his permissive will; but then, though he suffers it to be, he overrules it for good; as in the case of the selling of Joseph, Gen. l. 20. the evil of punishment of sin, or of affliction, is from God: in this sense *there is no evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it*, Amos iii. 6. But then punishment of sin is a good, as it is a vindication of the honour of divine justice, and of the righteous law of God; and the affliction of the people of God is for their good; and all evil things of that kind work for their good, both here and hereafter.

[1] De Republica, l. 6. p. 687.

v. God is infinitely good: as his understanding, wisdom, knowledge, and other perfections of his, are infinite; so is his goodness; he is abundant in it; it is so great, that it cannot be said how great it is; finite minds cannot comprehend it; the height, depth, length, and breadth of it, are unmeasurable; it knows no bounds nor limits; it is so perfect that nothing can be added to it: the goodness of a creature extends not to God, nor is it capable of communicating any to him, *who hath first given to him*, &c. Rom. xi. 35, 36.

vi. God is immutably and eternally good; the goodness of creatures is but as the morning cloud, and early dew, which soon passes away; of which there has been instances in angels and men: but the goodness of God is invariably the same, and endures continually; and though there has been, and are, such large communications of it to creatures, it is the same as ever, and remains an inexhaustible fountain.

vii. The goodness of God is communicative and diffusive; he is good, and he does good; "the whole earth is full of his goodness," Psal. cxix. 68. and xxxiii. 5. there is not a creature but what partakes of it, more or less, in some manner or another; but then it is communicated according to his sovereign will and pleasure. A heathen writer[k] argues the goodness of God from the existence of the world; since it is by the goodness of God the world is, God must be always good.

viii. This attribute of goodness belongs to each divine person, Father, Son, and Spirit; when Christ says, as quoted above, *there is none good, but one, that is, God*, it is to be understood not of God personally considered, or of one person, to the exclusion of the other; but of God essentially considered: and the design of Christ was, to raise the mind of the young man to whom he spoke, to an higher opinion of himself than what he had; even of him, not as a mere man, whom, as such, he called good; but as the true God, to whom this epithet, in its highest sense, only belongs: and it is predicated of the Father, 2 Chron. xxx. 18. of Christ, John x. 11. and of the Spirit, Nehem. ix. 20. Psal. cxliii. 10. and they must, indeed, in the same sense, be good, since they partake of one common undivided nature and essence, 1 John v. 7.

The goodness of God, with respect to the several objects of it, may be considered as general and special; in like manner as his love and mercy. There is the general goodness of God, which is as extensive as his mercy; *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 9. All creatures are made by God, and as they came from him, they are all very good; there is a goodness put into them, whereby they become good and beneficial to others, and especially to men: there is a goodness in inanimate creatures, in the metals and minerals of the earth; in the luminaries of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; they are pleasant, good to look at, their form, magnitude, and splendor: they are profitably good; by their light they themselves are seen; and other objects; by this men see to walk and work, and do the several

[k] Sallust. de Diis, c. 7.

usinesses of life; and through their kind and benign influences shed on arth, many precious fruits are bruoght forth, and the advantages of them ll men share in; God *makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good,* Matt. v. 45. hich is one great instance of his general goodness. In the vegetable creation here is a large display of the goodness of God; some herbs, plants, and trees, eing good for medicine, others for food, both for the cattle of the field, and r the service of men, Psal. civ. 14, 15. Among the animals, some are for ne use, and some for another, and many are meat for men; and even every reature of God is good, and to be received with thanksgiving, 1 Tim. iv. 4. nd all creatures, both men and beast, partake of the goodness of God in the reservation of them, Psal. xxxvi. 6. 1 Tim. iv. 10. and in the provision of ood for them, Psal. civ. 27, 28, and cxlvi. 15, 16. and cxlvii. 8. Acts xiv. 16, 17. nd xvii. 25, 28. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

There is indeed a difference made by God, in the distribution of his general oodness, in the effects of it; which are not imparted to all creatures alike. od gives more of his goodness to men than to brutes; since he gives them eason and understanding; whereby they become more knowing, and to be iser than the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heavens, Job xxxv. 11. nd angels have a greater share of his goodness than men; who excel as in trength, so in wisdom and knowledge; hence man is said to be made a little ower than the angels, Psal. viii. 5. and some men have a greater share in the eneral and providential goodness of God than others; either have larger en-owments of mind, are the wise and prudent of the world; or have more come-iness, strength, and health of body; or are possessed of greater wealth and iches, Eccles. ix. 11.

The special goodness of God, as to the effects of it, elect angels, and elect en, only partake of, which is sovereign and distinguishing; God is good to he elect angels, in choosing them in Christ, preserving them from apostacy, onfirming them in the estate they were created in, granting them nearness to imself, and many other peculiar favours; when the angels that sinned are not pared by him, but are reserved to judgment, 1 Tim. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 4. Elect en, the spiritual and mystical Israel of God, have a share in his special good-ess; *truly God is good to Israel,* Psal. lxxiii. 1. and that in a very distinguishng manner, as he is not to reprobates; the election hath obtained all the special lessings of goodness, grace here, and glory hereafter; light, life, and happiness; while the rest are blinded, Rom. xi. 7. they are made to differ from others thereby in time, and to all eternity; and yet among them there are different displays of divine goodness in the present state; some have greater spiritual gifts for usefulness than others; some have larger measures of grace; though they have all the same grace, yet not to the same degree; they have all alike precious faith, but in some it is weaker, in others stronger; and some have more spiritual light in the gospel, and more spiritual peace and joy, and larger discoveries of the love of God, and have more communion with him. All which must be referred to his sovereign good-will and pleasure.

Many are the acts and instances of divine goodness to the people of God in common. It has been observed, that the attribute of goodness, and the epithet of good, belong to each of the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; and they have each of them manifested their goodness in acts of it.

Jehovah the Father, has displayed his goodness to his special people, in his good designs towards them, and thoughts of them; in setting them apart for himself, his own glory, and their good; in laying up all good things for them in Christ, and in the covenant of his grace; in making promises of good things to them, both for this life, and that which is to come; and in bestowing good gifts on them, the gift of himself, the gift of his Son, and the gift of his Spirit; and all the blessings of goodness, as of adoption, justification, pardon of sin, &c. and all the graces of the Spirit, as the gift of faith, of repentance, of a good hope of eternal life, and also the gift of eternal life itself. Jehovah the Son, has manifested his goodness to the same persons; in becoming a Surety, and undertaking for their good; in partaking of their nature, in which good-will to men was expressed; and in working out the great and good work of their redemption and salvation; he is the good Shepherd, and has shewn himself to be so, by laying down his life for the sheep, and by providing a good fold, and good pasture for them: he is, and has been in all ages, the Fountain of goodness and grace to all his people, for the supply of all their wants; and he ever lives to speak a good word, and intercede for good things for them. Jehovah the Spirit, is good unto them, as a Teacher, Sanctifier, and Comforter of them, as a Spirit of adoption, grace, and supplication; as the author of the good work of grace in them; as the guide of them through this world; and as the earnest and pledge of their future glory, and a sealer of them up unto the day of redemption.

OF THE ANGER AND WRATH OF GOD.

BESIDES the love and kindness of God, his grace, favour, and good-will, his mercy, pity, and compassion; and his long-suffering and forbearance; which flow from the goodness of his nature; there are other things to be considered, which may come under the notion of affections; as anger, wrath, hatred, &c. The anger and wrath of God are often used promiscuously in scripture, to signify the same thing, and yet they sometimes seem to be distinct; and according to our notion of them, as in men, they may be distinguished: anger is a lower and lesser degree of wrath, and wrath is the height of anger; and accordingly I shall distinctly consider them, as in God. With respect to anger I shall,

I. Shew that it belongs to God; and in what sense, and on what account.

II. Shew with whom he is angry; or on whom his anger is exercised.

1. That Anger belongs to God, or may be predicated of him. This is denied

by some philosophers of the Cynic and Stoic sects, because it is a passion; they allow grace, good-will, and beneficence in God to men, but not anger; this they suppose to be a weakness, and even a sort of madness [l], and what is unbecoming a wise and good man, and much more unbecoming Deity. The Epicureans deny that either is in God; neither favour and good-will, nor anger and wrath [m]; for they imagine he has no concern in the affairs of men, and neither regards their good actions, nor their bad ones; and so is neither pleased nor displeased with them; and is neither kind and favourable to them; nor is angry with them, nor resents what is done by them. But the scriptures every where ascribe anger to God; and often speak of it, as being kindled against particular persons, and against whole bodies of men; and give many particular instances of it: to produce the whole proof of this, would be to transcribe great part of the Bible. But then anger is to be considered not as a passion, or affection in God, as it is in men; and especially as it may be defined from the etymology of the Latin word for it, *ira*, as given by a learned grammarian [n], deriving it from *ire*, to go; as if a man, when in anger, goes out of himself; and when he lays it down, returns to himself again; this cannot, in any sense, be ascribed to God: rather it may be, as if it was *ura*, and so is *ab urendo*, from burning; or rather from the Hebrew word חרה which signifiss to burn; and the anger of God is compared to fire in scripture, and is often said to be kindled; but then we are not to imagine, when God is said to be angry, that there is any commotion or perturbation in God's mind; that he is ruffled and discomposed, or that there is any pain or uneasiness in him, as in human minds; so it may be in finite created spirits, but not in an infinite and uncreated one, as God is: and much less is this to be considered as a criminal passion in him, as it too often is in men; for God is a pure and holy being, without iniquity: besides, there may be anger in men without sin; we are exhorted to *be angry and sin not*, Eph. iv. 26. and it is certain there was anger in the human nature of Christ, in whom there was no sin, nor was he conscious of any, Mark iii. 5. and so there may be in the divine mind, without an imputation of weakness or sin. Anger in God is no other than a displicency with sin, and with sinners, on account of it; it is often said in scripture, that such and such a thing displeased him, or was evil, and not right in his sight, Numb. xi. 1. 2 Sam. xi. 27. Psal. lx. 1. Isai. lix. 15. All sin is displeasing to God; he cannot take any pleasure in it, nor look upon it with delight; it is so contrary to his nature, and repugnant to his will, he cannot but have an aversion to it, and an abhorrence of it; and there are some sins more especially which provoke him to anger; as the sins against the first table of the law, particularly idolatry; which of all sins, is the most provoking to him; since it strikes at his very being, and robs him of his glory; see Deut. xxxii. 16, 21. Judg. ii. 12, 13. 1 Kings xvi. 33.

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[l] Vide Senecam de Ira, l. 1. c. 1. Sallustium de Diis, c. 14. & Demophili Sentent. p. 8. Ed. Gale.

[m] Vide Lactantium de ira Dei, c. 4, & 5.

[n] Donatus apud Zanchium de Natura Dei, l. 4. c. 6. p. 407.

Likewise distrust of the power and providence of God, murmuring at it, and complaining of it; which was often the case of the Israelites; and by which they provoked the Lord to anger; so perjury, false swearing, the taking the name of God in vain, and blasphemy of it; profanation of the Lord's day, and neglect of his word, worship, and ordinances: and not these only, but sins against the second table of the law, are highly displeasing to God, and resented by him; as disobedience to parents, murder, adultery, theft, false-witness, covetousness, and every evil thing, see Isai. v. 24, 25. Now *who knoweth the power of* God's *anger?* Psal. xc. 11. nothing can resist it, nor stand before it; not rocks and mountains, which are overturned and cast down by it; nor the mightiest monarchs, nor the proudest mortals, nor the stoutest and adamantine hearts; none can stand before God when once he is angry, Job ix. 5, 13. Psal. lxxvi. 7. Nahum i. 6.

II. The objects of the anger of God, or on whom it is exercised. *God is angry with the wicked every day*, Psal. vii. 11. because they are daily sinning against him; their whole lives are one continued series and course of wickedness; all they do is sin; their very actions in civil life, the ploughing of the wicked, is sin; and all their religious services are but *splendida peccata*, shining sins, and so are displeasing to God, and resented by him; their sacrifices, brought with a wicked mind, without a right principle, and a right end, are an abomination to him, Prov. xxi. 4, 27. being in the flesh, in an unregenerate state, they cannot please God, nor do the things which are pleasing in his sight; being destitute of the grace of God, and particularly of faith; "without which it is impossible to please him." These, though God is angry with them continually, yet they do not always appear under the visible and public tokens of his resentment; the rod of God is not on them; nor are they in trouble, as other men, and have more than heart can wish; oftentimes their families, flocks and herds, increase; and they spend their days in health, wealth, and pleasure, Job xxi. 7—13. Psal. lxxiii. 3—12. and seem as if they were the favourites of heaven, and think themselves to be such. But though God is slow to anger, as he is often described, moves slowly to express his anger; yet he must most certainly do it in the issue of things; and though men may promise themselves impunity in sin, and fancy they shall have peace when they walk after the imagination of their evil hearts, and add sin to sin; yet at length God will not spare them; but his anger and jealousy shall smoke against them, and all the curses written in the law shall come upon them, Deut. xxix. 19, 20.

Moreover, God is angry with his own special people, holy and good men; we read of his anger being kindled against Aaron and Miriam, for speaking against Moses; and against Moses and Aaron, for not sanctifying him before the children of Israel; insomuch that neither of them were admitted to enter the land of Canaan; and against David, Solomon, and others, for sins committed by them. And this is not at all inconsistent with the love of God unto them: anger is not opposite to love; there may be anger in the nearest and dearest relatives; and where there is the most affectionate regard to each other: the anger of Jacob was kindled against his beloved Rachel; a father may be angry with his son, and chastize him for a fault, and yet dearly love him; and a son may be angry with a father, as Jonathan was with Saul, yet bear a true filial affection for him. God loves his people with an everlasting and unchangeable love, and never alters and varies in it; and yet may be angry, that is, displeased with them, and shew his resentment at sin committed by them, by his chastizement of them, and still continue his love to them; for even that is done in love. Besides, the anger of God towards them, is often only in their sense and apprehension of it; when God goes forth towards them, in some dispensations of his, which are not agreeable to them, they conclude he is angry with them; and when these dispensations are varied, then they suppose his anger is turned away from them, Isai. xii. 1. so when he hides his face from them, and unbelief prevails, they interprete it, putting them away in anger, and shutting up his tender mercies in anger, Psal. xxvii. 9. and lxxvii. 9. when he seems to turn a deaf ear to their prayers, and does not give an immediate answer to them; this they call being angry against the prayer of his people, Psal. lxxx. 4. and when he afflicts them, in one way or another, then they apprehend he comes forth in anger against them; and "they have no soundness in their flesh, because of his anger; nor rest in their bones, because of their sins," Psal. xxxviii. 3. but when he takes off his afflicting hand, grants his gracious presence, and manifests his pardoning love and grace, then they conclude he has turned himself from the fierceness of his anger, Psal. lxxxv. 2, 3. now this apparent anger, or appearance of anger, *endures but for a moment*, Psal. xxx. 5. a very short space of time indeed; though God hides his face from his people, and chides them for their sins; yet he does not keep anger for ever: this is the criterion by which he is distinguished from other gods, in that he retains not his anger for ever, because he deligheth in mercy, Psal. ciii. 9. Mic. vii. 18. and in this the anger of God towards his people, differs from his anger to wicked men, since the one is but for a moment, and the other is continual.

II. The Wrath of God is *the heat of his great anger*, Deut. xxix. 24. it is his anger not only kindled and incensed, but blown up into a flame; it is the indignation of his anger, the fury, and fierceness of it, Isai. xxx. 30. and xlii. 25. Hos. xi. 9. and it seems to be no other than his punitive justice, and includes his will to punish sinners according to the demerit of their sins in strict justice; his threatenings to do it, and the actual execution of it; which is the vengeance that belongs to him and he will recompence; even his vindictive wrath, or vengeful judgment; *What if God willing to shew his wrath*, &c? Rom. ix. 22. The wrath of God may be considered,

1. As temporary, or what is executed in the present life; of which there have been many instances and examples, and there will be more; and a brief review of them will give a more enlarged idea of the wrath of God. Not to take notice of the apostate angels, whom God has cast down to hell; where, though

they may not be in full torment, yet are dreadful instances of the wrath of God against sin; since not one of them have been spared, or have shared in pardoning grace and mercy. I shall only observe what examples of it have been, or will be, among men. The first instance of it is in the condemnation of Adam, and all his posterity, for the first sin and for only one single sin of his. How great must that sin be? what sinfulness must there be in it? how greatly must the divine Being be incensed by it? in that, for it, he has caused death, that is, his wrath to pass sententially on him, and all his offspring; so that, in consequence of it, all the children of Adam are the children of God's wrath. The next is the drowning of the old world, when full of violence and corruption; so that God repented he had made man in it, and it grieved him to the heart; and in his wrath he determined to destroy man and beast in it; and which he did, by bringing a flood on the world of the ungodly. Then follows another, though not so general; but limited and restrained to a part of the world; the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and others of the plain; whose inhabitants being notorious sinners, provoked the eyes of God's glory to such a degree, that he rained fire and brimstone from heaven upon them; and set them as an example and emblem of mens suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The plagues inflicted on the Egyptians, for not letting Israel go, when demanded of them, is another instance of the wrath of God; for by inflicting these on them, he not only made a way to his anger, to shew it forth, as the Psalmist says; but, as he also observes, "he cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble," Psal. lxxviii. 49, 50. The children of Israel themselves, often provoked the Lord to wrath; and brought it down upon them, for their sins; as at Horeb, when they made the calf; at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-hattaavah, where they murmured against the Lord, Deut. ix. 8—22. as they did likewise at the report of the spies, concerning the land of Canaan; when "God swore in his wrath, they should not enter into his rest." And again, upon the affair of Korah, and his accomplices, when wrath went forth from the Lord, and the plague began, Numb. xiv. 23. and xvi. 46. Witness, also, their several captivities; particularly their captivity in Babylon, through their mocking at, and misuse of the prophets of the Lord; so that wrath arose against them; and there was no remedy; and their last captivity, and destruction, by the Romans; when wrath came upon them to the uttermost; and under which wrath, and in which captivity they are to this day. Whenever the four sore judgments of God, the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, have been exercised in the world, as they often have been; they are always in wrath; and these with earthquakes, and such like uncommon events, are pre-significations, and fore-tokens of greater wrath yet to come; in a little while, the seven vials full of the wrath of God, will be poured forth on antichrist, and on the antichristian states; and the judgment of God will come on Babylon in one day. And when the end of all things is come, the earth, and all in it, will be burnt with fire, and the heavens melt away with fervent heat;

the day of the Lord will burn like an oven, and the wicked, like stubble, will be burnt up by it, and will have neither root nor branch left: all which will be expressive of the great wrath of God. But there is no greater instance of it, or what more fully demonstrates it, than what our Lord Jesus Christ suffered and endured as the Surety of his people, in their room and stead; when, their sins being imputed to him, were found on him, and he was stricken for them; the sword of justice was sheathed in him; the vindictive wrath of God was poured forth upon him, to the uttermost of the demerit of sin; God spared him not: how unconceivably great must his wrath be against sin, when God spared not in the least his own dearly beloved Son, but suffered him to be put to the most exquisite pain, both in body and soul, for the sins of his people?

II. There is the wrath of God that is yet to come: the scriptures speak of future wrath; wrath that will take place in the life which is to come; which, in part, commences at the death of wicked men; and will be compleat at their resurrection from the dead, Matt. iii. 7. 1 Thess. i. 10. this is expressed by fire, than which nothing is more intolerable; even devouring fire and everlasting burnings, not to be endured; this is no other than the curse of the law that is broken; which not only reaches to this life, but to that which is to come; it is the same with the second death; which lies in a separation from God, and, in a sense of his hot displeasure; it is called hell and hell-fire; the word for which, in the New Testament, is taken from Ge-hinnom, or the valley of Hinnom; where the Jews burnt their children in sacrifice to Molech; and which place, from the beating of drums in it, that the shrieks of the children might not be heard by their parents, was called Tophet; of which the prophet says, as an emblem of hell-fire, or the fire of the divine wrath; *Tophet is ordained of old—the pile thereof is fire, and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it,* Isai. xxx. 33. which is an awful representation of the wrath of God. And by whatsoever term this state of wrath is expressed, it is always spoken of as what will continue for ever: it is called everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, everlasting destruction, " the smoke of torment, that ascends for ever and ever;" and for the commencement of which, in its full extent, there is a day fixed, called, " the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God;" until which time God reserves wrath for his adversaries; it is laid up in store with him, among his treasures, and will be ever laying out, and pouring forth.

As to the objects of this wrath, seeing it is revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men; it lies against all that are unrighteous and ungodly; and as all have sinned, and are under sin, all are *children of wrath,* Eph. ii. 3. Rom. i. 18. and iii. 9, 23. but there are some particularly described, on whom this wrath comes, and they are called *children of disobedience,* Eph. v. 5, 6. Col. iii. 5, 6. such who are disobedient to the light of nature, rebel against it, and hold truth in unrighteousness, which that discovers; and so as they sin without law, they perish without law, Rom. i. 18—28. and ii. 12. and who also are disobedient to the law of God, break it, and are convicted by it, as transgressors, whom it pronounces guilty, and is the ministration of condemnation and death unto them; and who are disobedient to the gospel of Christ, obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, and are slaves to their sinful lusts and pleasures; on these come indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; even on every soul of man that does evil, 2 Thess. i. 8. Rom. ii. 8, 9. they are also represented as unbelievers; *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him:* he that does not believe that Christ is the Son of God, that he is the Messiah and Saviour of men, the sentence of wrath, which the law has passed on him, as a transgressor of that, remains; and since he denies divine revelation, rejects the gospel-scheme, and disbelieves Christ as a Saviour, and salvation by him, there is no help for him; wrath is on him, and that without remedy, it must abide: now it is not any sort of unbelief for which this wrath is, and abides; not for that which is through the want of the means of faith, such as in heathens; for "how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. x. 14, 17. nor which is through the want of the special grace of faith, which is the gift of God, and peculiar to his elect, and which he only can give, and yet denies it; and which, without his grace vouchsafed, they can never have: but it is the disbelief of the report of the gospel, by such who have the opportunity of reading and hearing it, and yet either attend not to the evidence of it; or, notwithstanding that, reject it; they receive not the record God has given of his Son, and so make him a liar, than which nothing is more provoking to wrath, 1 John v. 10. This was the case of the Jews of old, John iii. 19. and is of the deists of the present age. In short, the wrath of God comes upon men either for the sins against the light of nature, or against the law of God, or against the gospel of Christ.

There are some on whom no wrath comes here, nor hereafter; who are the vessels of mercy, afore-prepared for glory: concerning whom Jehovah says, *fury is not in me*; and to whom he is all love, love itself, Isai. xxvii. 4. 1 John iv. 16. being sinners indeed, and transgressors of the law of God, they are *children of wrath as others*, Eph. ii. 3. which phrase not only means that they are deserving of wrath, but that, as they are sinners, they are found guilty of it; and not only found guilty, but are condemned unto it; they are really under the sentence of wrath, condemnation, and death; they are obnoxious to the curse of the law, which is no other than the wrath of God; they are liable to it, and in danger of it; and being so near it, how is it that they escape it, and are secured from it? They are secured from it by the decree of God, who has appointed them not to wrath, but to obtain salvation, 1 Thess. v. 9. which decree is unfrustrable by the oath of God, who has swore that he will not be wrath with them, Isai. liv. 9. which is immutable: by the suretyship-engagements of Christ for them, to bear it in their room; and till that was done, God forbore to execute the sentence; called the forbearance of God, Rom. iii. 25. by Christ's actually bearing the chastizement of their peace; by being made a curse for them, and enduring the wrath of God in their room; whereby he delivered them from wrath to come, Psal. lxxxix. 38. 1 Thess. v. 10. and by his righteousness imputed to them, through which, being justified, they are saved from wrath, Rom. v. 9. though even these persons may have, at times, some apprehensions of the wrath of God; as, particularly, under first awakenings, and convictions of sin; when the law works a sense of wrath in them, and leaves in them a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation; when they flee to Christ, from wrath to come, and say, " Lord, save us, or we perish;" and afterwards, when under the hidings of God's face, or his afflicting hand is upon them, they imagine that the wrath of God lies hard upon them, and his fierce wrath goes over them, Psal. lxxxviii. 7, 16. see Lam. iii. 1. but in reality, there is no wrath comes upon them now; their afflictions and chastizements are all in love; and there will be no curse hereafter; but they shall always see the face of God, and be " in his presence, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore," Rev. iii. 19. and xxii. 3, 4.

OF THE HATRED OF GOD.

THERE are some[*] that deny that hatred belongs to God; or that he hates any thing; and urge a passage in the book of Wisdom, chap. xi. 25. Thou lovest all beings, and hatest none of these that thou hast made; which is true of the creatures of God, as such; for as they are made by him they are all very good; and are loved, delighted in, and not hated by him, Nor is hatred to be considered as a passion in him, as it is in men; who is a pure, active Spirit, and is solely agent, and not a patient; is not capable of suffering any thing: much less as it is a criminal passion, by which men, in their worst estate, are described, *hateful*, and *hating one another*, Tit. iii. 3. since he is a perfectly holy Being, and without iniquity. Yet the scriptures do, in many places, attribute to him hatred both of persons and things, Psal. v. 5. Zech. viii. 17. and most truly and rightly; and this may be concluded from love being in God, as has been shewn; though this is made use of as an argument against it, because opposite to it; but where there is love of any person or thing, there will be an hatred of that which is contrary to the object loved: thus good men, as they love those that are good, like themselves, and good things, so they hate that which is evil; they love God, the chiefest good; and they hate sin, the chiefest evil, as diametrically opposite to him, Psal. xcvii. 10. Amos v. 15. So the righteous Lord, as he loves righteousness and righteous men, his people; as they are clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and found in the ways of righteousness; so he hates unrighteousness, and unrighteous men; for to the Son of God he saith, *thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed*

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[*] Aquinas contr. Gentiles, l. 1. c. 96. Vid. Francisc. Silvester. in ibid.

thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows, Psal. xlv. 7. besides, it is a virtue, yea grace, in good men, to hate sin that dwells in them, and is committed by them, as the apostle did, Rom. vii. 15. for without the grace of God it is not hated; and also to hate them that hate the Lord, as David did, and for the truth of which he appeals to God, *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? I hate them with perfect hatred*, Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. Now if it is a virtue, or owing to the grace of God in them, that they do hate sin and sinners, then this must come from God, from whom all grace, and every good gift comes; and consequently must be in him, in a higher degree, even in the most perfect manner; to all which may be added, that hatred, when ascribed to God, sometimes signifies no other than his will to punish sin and sinners, and his execution of it, Psal. v. 5, 6. and so is an act of justice, of punitive justice; *And is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?* No; he is righteous in that, as he is in all his works, Rom. iii. 5. For the further illustration of this point, I shall consider both what that is; and who they are God is said to hate.

1. What this is he hates, i. e. sin. This is consistent with his not hating any of his creatures for sin is no creature of his; he is not the author of sin; all the creatures he made were very good; but sin was not among them; every creature of God is good, and not to be refused, rejected, and hated by men; as none are by God, as such; but sin is not any of them. Sin must be hateful to God, since it is so contrary to his nature, to his will, and to his righteous law. All sin is an abomination to him; but there are some sins that are particularly observed as hated by him, as idolatry, Deut. xvi. 22. Jer. xliv. 3—5. perjury, Zech. viii. 17. all insincere and hypocritical acts of worship, Isai. i. 14. 15. Amos v. 21. sins against the two tables of the law; as murder, which stands among the six things which God hates, Prov. vi. 16—18. fornication, adultery, community of wives; the deeds of the Nicolaitans he is said to hate, Rev. ii. 6, 15. theft, robbery, rapine, and violence of every sort; all kind of injury to the persons and properties of men, Psal. xi. 5. Isai. lxi. 8. and every evil thing a man may imagine against his neighbour, Zech. viii. 17. And all this is true of each of the divine persons. God the Father has shewn his hatred of sin by the judgments he has executed in casting down from heaven to hell the angels that sinned, driving Adam and Eve out of paradise, bringing a flood upon the world of the ungodly, raining fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah; with other instances in following ages, and later ones; and by the chastizements of his own people, when they sin and transgress his law; but in nothing more than by the condemnation of sin in the flesh of Christ, when he suffered in the room and stead of his people, as their Surety and Saviour; and so by the punishment of wicked men to all eternity. The Son of God has given sufficient proof of his loving righteousness, and hating iniquity, of whom these things are expressly said, Psal. xlv. 7. Heb. i. 8, 9. and are true of him as a divine person, and as Mediator, and as man; and this he has done by inveighing against the sins of the Jews in his time; by his severe usage of the

buyers and sellers in the temple: and by his exhortations and threatenings to men to sin no more, lest worse things came unto them: and the Holy Ghost is not only grieved by the sinful actions and behaviour of men; but may be vexed by them, so as to turn to be their enemy, and fight against them, Isai. lxiii. 10. Which leads me to consider,

II. Who they are that God hates. They are sinners, *workers of iniquity*, Psal. v. 5. not men, as men, but as sinful men; and not all that sin, or have sin in them; for then all would be hated, for all have sinned in Adam, and by actual transgressions; and none, even the best of men, are without it, Rom. iii. 23. 1 John i. 8. but workers of it, traders in it, whose whole lives are one continued series of sinning; to those it will be said, I never knew you; I never loved you, I always hated you; *depart from me, ye that work iniquity*, Matt. vii. 23. make a trade of it; make it the business of their lives, continually and constantly commit it, John viii. 34. 1 John iii. 8, 9. and God is impartial, he hates all the workers of iniquity; and brings down his *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile*, Rom. ii. 8, 9. The scriptures speak of an hatred of some persons antecedent to sin, and without the consideration of it; which, though it may be attended with some difficulty to account for; yet may be understood in a good sense, and consistent with the perfections of God, and with what has been said of his hatred of sin and sinners; for thus it is said of Jacob and Esau, personally considered; *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, Mal. i. 2. and which was before the one had done any good, or the other done any evil; as the apostle expressly says, Rom. ix. 11—13. *The children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil; that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her*, to *Rebekah*, the mother of them, whilst they were in her womb, *the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* And what is said of these, is true of all the objects of election and non-election. And now let it be observed, that this hatred is to be understood, not of any positive hatred in the heart of God towards them, but of a negative and comparative hatred of them; that whereas while some are chosen of God, and preferred by him, and are appointed to obtain grace and glory, and to be brought to great dignity and honour; others are passed by, neglected, postponed, and set less by; which is called an hatred of them; that is, a comparative one, in comparison of the love shewn, and the preference given to others; in this sense the word is used in Luke xiv. 26. *If any man hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple:* the meaning of which cannot be, that a man must have positive hatred of such near relations, and of his own life; but that he should be negligent of these in comparison of Christ; postpone them to him, set less by them, have a less affection for them than him, and so prefer him unto them; in like sense are we to understand the above expression concerning Esau, and all reprobates: and that this may appear yet clear, it should be observed, that in this business there are two acts of the divine will; the one is a will not to bestow benefits of special goodness; not to give grace, nor to raise to honour and glory: and this God may do antecedent to, and without any consideration of sin; but act according to his sovereign will and pleasure; since he is under no obligation to confer benefits, but may bestow them on whom he pleases; as he himself says, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Matt. xx. 15. The other act of the divine will is, to inflict evil; and that is always for sin, and in consideration of it; for though sin is not the cause of the act of the will, it is the cause of the thing willed, which is not willed without the consideration of it; they are the wicked God has made, or appointed to the day of evil, and no other; ungodly men, whom he has fore-ordained to that condemnation, vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction by sin; on whom it is the will of God to shew is wrath, and make his power known, Prov. xvi. 4. Jude 4. Rom. ix. 22. In the one act, hatred, or a denial of grace, is without the consideration of sin; in the other, hatred, or a will to punish, is with it; punishment being only willed for it: but then God never hates his elect in any sense; they are always loved by him; to which hatred is opposite: he may be angry with them, and chastize them for their sins; yea, he may, as he says, and as they apprehend, in a little wrath, hide his face from them; but he never hates them; though he hates their sins, and shews his resentment at them, he still loves them freely; renews, and raises them up by repentance, when fallen into sin, and manifests and applies his pardoning grace to them, and never bears any hatred to their persons.

OF THE JOY OF GOD.

JOY, which is often attributed to God in the scriptures, bears some resemblance to the affection of joy in men; but is, by some philosophers[p], denied of him; and, indeed, is not to be considered as a passion in him, as in them; and particularly, when in its height, or at an excess; as it is a transport of the mind, and carries it out of, and beyond itself, as it were; as in the cases of Jacob, when the news of his son Joseph being alive were brought him; and of the disciples, when they heard of the resurrection of Christ, believed not for joy: and, indeed, all affections that are ascribed to God, are ascribed to him, not as in themselves, but as to their effects; such and such effects being done by men, when so and so affected. Hence when similar ones are done by God, the like affections are ascribed to him; and this of joy is expressed by him in very different effects; as as in inflicting punishment, as well as in conferring benefits; in the one he rejoices in the glory of his justice and holiness; and in the other, in the displays of his grace and goodness; see Deut. xxviii. 63. Though joy, as ascribed to God, seems to be no other than delight and complacency in persons and things; so some philosophers and schoolmen make them to be the same: or, however, take joy to be a species of delight; only they observe a difference, with respect to brute animals, in whom there is delight, but not joy[q]; it is also made a question with them[r] whether delight is a passion? but my business with it is only as it concerns God, and is predicated of him; and who may be said,

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[p] Sallustius de Diis, c, 14. Plato in Philebo, p. 384.

I. To rejoice and take delight and complacency in himself, in his own nature, and the perfections of it; in which there is an all-sufficiency, and so a fulness of content and satisfaction; and he rests infinitely well-pleased in himself. Hence Aquinas[s], who defines joy and delight a certain quietation, or rest of the will, in what is willed by it; observes, that God must greatly rest quiet and satisfied in himself, which is his principal *volitum*, or what is willed by him, as having all-sufficiency in him, and therefore by his own will greatly rejoices and delights in himself: and though he makes joy and delight in some respect to differ; delight flowing from a good really conjoined; and joy being not only of that, but of something exterior; hence, he says, it is plain God properly delights in himself; but rejoices in himself and others. So the Jews[t] interpret 1 Chron. xvi. 27. gladness in his place, of joy in himself.

II. He rejoices and takes delight and complacency in his works, Psal. civ. 31. In the works of creation, which, when he had finished, he not only rested from them, but rested in them, with delight and pleasure; he looked them over, and pronounced them all very good; and he still appears to have pleasure in them, by his continuance of them in being, by upholding all things by the word of his power: he rejoices and delights in the works of his providence, in which he is always concerned, John v. 17. These, so far as they are known by men, yield an unspeakable delight and pleasure in the contemplation of them: and especially when they will be manifest; and though they are now, many of them, unsearchable and past finding out, yet there is a depth of riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God in them; but what delight must God take in them, being all according to his sovereign will and pleasure: by whom they are seen and known in their beauty, harmony, and connection; and the springs and causes of them, and the several ends answered by them? God rejoices and takes delight particularly in the great work of redemption, contrived by his infinite wisdom, and wrought out by his Son; partly because of his own glory displayed therein; as of his love, grace, and mercy, so of his truth and faithfulness, holiness and justice; and partly because of the salvation of his people, secured thereby; a thing his heart was set upon from everlasting; what he resolved should be, and what he appointed them to: he rejoices and delights in his work of grace on the hearts of his people; this is their beauty, even the beauty of holiness, which he, the king, greatly desires; by which they are all glorious within, and well-pleasing in his sight; he delights in the graces which he himself, by his Spirit, has wrought in them, and in the exercise of those graces, as drawn forth by him, their faith, hope, love, fear, &c. *The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy,* Psal. cxlvii. 11. see Cant. iv. 9, 10. And so all his people, as they are his workmanship, his poem, curiously wrought by him; the works of his hands, in whom, and whereby he is glorified; he rejoices in them, and blesses on account of them, Isai. xix. 25. and lx. 21. Wherefore,

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[q] Aquin. Sum. Theolog. prima 2 par. Quest. 31. art. 3. & Avicenna in ibid. [r] Ibid. art. 2. & Aristot. apud ibid. [s] Contr. Gentiles, l. 1. c. 90. [t] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2, c. 14.

III. He may be truly said to rejoice, delight, and take pleasure in his people, as he often is; they are his Hephzibah, in whom he delights; his Beulah, to whom he is married; and therefore, as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so does the Lord rejoice over them, Psal. cxlix. 4. Isai. lxii. 4, 5. not in all men; for there are some in whom he has no joy, vessels in whom he has no delight and pleasure, Isai. ix. 17. and xxvii. 11. Mal. i. 10. but his special covenant-people, Jer. xxxii. 38—41. and these not as creatures, and still less as sinful creatures, either as considered in Adam, or in themselves, guilty and defiled; but as in Christ, in whom God is well pleased, and in all that are in him as chosen in him, and given to him; so God the Father rejoiced in them from everlasting; for as his love to them, so his joy in them, is so early; it being a love of complacency and delight; and of which joy there are new expressions in conversion; see Luke xv. 7—24. And likewise the Son of God, was from all eternity rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth; and his delights were with the sons of men, Prov. viii. 31. and which joy he felt under all his sorrows and sufferings, when working out their salvation, Heb. xii. 2. and which he expresses at their conversion; that being the time of finding his lost people; and, indeed, the day of his open espousals to them, and so of the gladness of his heart, Luke xv. 3—5. Cant. iii: 11. and they will also be his joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the last day; when they shall be introduced into his presence, not only with joy and gladness in themselves, but with it in him, who will present them before his Father and himself, with exceeding joy, Psal. xlv. 13, 14. Jude 24. and this joy over them, both in him and his divine Father, is to do them good, and issues in it; to bestow benefits upon them, grace here, and glory hereafter; to beautify them with salvation; to make them prosperous, especially in spiritual things, in which prosperity he takes pleasure; and in making all things work together for their good, Jer. xxxii. 41. Psal. cxlix. 4. and xxxv. 27. which joy is full; there is a redundancy, an overflow of it; it is hearty and sincere, is the strength and security of the saints, and will remain for ever. Nehem. viii. 10. Zeph. iii. 17.

OF THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

HAVING considered those attributes of God which bear a likeness to affections in men; I proceed to consider those which in them may be called virtues; as holiness, justice, or righteousness, truth, or faithfulness; I shall begin with the holiness of God. And shew,

I. That it is in God, that it belongs to him, and what it is. The scriptures most abundantly ascribe it to him; he is very frequently called *holy*, and *the holy One*; this title he takes to himself, Isai. xl. 25. Hos. xi. 9. and is often given him by others, angels and men; and, indeed, without holiness he would not be that perfect being he is; unholiness is the imperfection of every rational being in whom it is; it is what has made angels and men both impure and imperfect; and since no men, even the best, are without sin; therefore none are in themselves perfect. But as for God, his ways and works are perfect, and so is his nature; being just and true, and without iniquity, Deut. xxxii. 4. Holiness is the purity and rectitude of his nature; whose nature is so pure, as to be without spot or stain, or any thing like it: he is light and purity itself, and in him is no darkness or impurity at all; as "he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," so he is of a purer heart and mind than to have one sinful thought in it: his thoughts are not as ours; he is the pattern of purity and holiness, and to be copied after: men should be holy, as and because he is holy; it is one of the imitable perfections of God, in which he is to be followed; though it cannot be attained to, as it is in him, Lev. xi. 44, 45. and xix. 2. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

Holiness is an essential attribute of God; it is his nature and essence; it is himself; he is holiness itself; "he swears by himself, because he can swear by no greater;" and he will not swear by any less, and yet he swears by his holiness, Heb. vi. 13. Psal. lxxxix. 35. Amos iv. 2. and vi. 8. which places put and compared together, shew that the holiness of God is himself; and it has been thought to be not so much a particular and distinct attribute of itself, as the lustre, glory and harmony of all the rest; and is what is called *the beauty of the Lord*, Psal. xxvii. 4. as it is the beauty of the good angels, and of regenerate men; and, indeed, what is wisdom or knowledge, without holiness, but craft and cunning? or what is power, without it, but tyranny, oppression, and cruelty? but God is *glorious in holiness*, Exod. xv. 11. this gives a lustre to all his perfections, and is the glory of them; and therefore none of them are or can be exercised in a wrong manner, or to any bad purpose. And as it is his nature and essence, it is infinite and unbounded; it cannot be greater than it is, and can neither be increased nor diminished; when, therefore, men are exhorted to sanctify the Lord, and are directed to pray that his name may be hallowed, or sanctified, Isai. viii. 13. Matt. vi. 9. the meaning is not as if he was to be, or could be made more holy than he is; but that his holiness be declared, manifested, and celebrated more and more; it is so perfect that nothing can be added to it. And as it is his nature and essence, it is immutable and invariable; the holiness of a creature is changeable, as the holiness of angels and men; which has appeared by the apostacy of the one, and the fall of the other; and the holiness of saints, though its principle is the same, the acts and exercises are variable. But God is always the same holy Being, without any variableness, or shadow of turning. He is originally holy, he is so in and of himself, and of no other; there is none prior and superior to him, from whom he could derive or receive any holiness; as his Being is of himself, so is his holiness, which is himself: the holiness of angels and men is not of themselves, but of God; he is the fountain of holiness to all rational creatures that partake of it; it is peculiar to him, yea, only in him; Hannah says, in her song, *There is none holy as the Lord*, 1 Sam. ii. 2. In another song yet to be sung, the song of Moses and of the Lamb, it is said, *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy*, Rev. xv. 4. The holiness of creatures is but a shadow of holiness, in comparison of the holiness of God; the holy angels are chargeable with folly in his sight, and they cover their faces with their wings, while they celebrate the perfection of God's holiness; as conscious to themselves, that theirs will not bear to be compared with his, Job iv. 17, 11. Isai. vi. 2, 3. God only is essentially, originally, underivatively, perfectly, and immutably holy.

This must be understood not of one person in the Deity, to the exclusion of the rest; as not of the Spirit, though he is peculiarly called the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Spirit, yet not to the exclusion of the Father and Son; so not of the Father, to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; for as they are the one God, who is a Spirit, they partake of the same common and undivided nature, and all the perfections of it, and of this with the rest. Hence we read of the holy Elohim, or divine Persons, in the plural number; and of the holy ones, the holy Father, the holy Son, and the holy Spirit, Josh. xxiv. 19. Prov. xxx. 2. Dan. iv. 17. And no doubt respect is had to the holiness of the three divine persons, by the seraphim, when they said, *holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts!* Isai. vi. 3. and by the four beasts, or living creatures, continually employed in the same divine service, celebrating the perfections of God in much the same language, saying, *holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!* Rev. iv. 8. As there is no doubt made of the Deity of the Father, there can be none of his holiness: our Lord addresses him under the relation of Father, and under the epithet of *holy Father*, John xvii. 11. and all that has been said of the holiness of God belongs to him; of which there can be no question made: and it is as true of the Son as of the Father; for as the Father is the holy Father, he must be the holy Son, since he is of the same nature, and is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" and as the Father is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, so is the Son; as the Father loves righteousness and hates iniquity, this is expressly said of the Son, Heb. i. 8, 9. he is eminently called "the holy one of God," Psal. xvi. 10. and "the holy one of Israel," more than thirty times in the prophecy of Isaiah: and particularly is so called along with the titles of Redeemer and Husband, which are peculiar to the second Person, the the Son of God, the Redeemer of his people, and the Husband of his church, Isai. xlvii. 4. and liv. 5. yea, he is called the most holy, who was anointed with the Holy Ghost above his fellows, and "having the Spirit without measure," Dan. ix. 24. the title of holy he takes to himself when addressing the church; which is an emblem of the purest state of the church militant on earth, the church of Philadelphia; *These things saith he that is holy*, Rev. iii. 7. Nay, the devil himself gives it to him; *I know thee, who thou art, the holy One of God*, Luke iv. 34. Besides, Christ is not only holy in his human nature, even perfectly so, and sanctified and set apart to his office as Mediator, by his Father; for which office holiness is a necessary requisite and qualification; but he is the Fountain of holiness to his church and people; they are sanctified in him and by him; he is made sanctification to them, and all the holiness, or holy graces that are in them, are all from him, John i. 14, 16. which could not be, if he was not holy, and even holiness itself. And as for the blessed Spirit, the third Person in the Deity, the epithet of holy is commonly given to him, as before observed; and very truly, since he is of the same nature with the Father and the Son; and so he is holy by nature and essence, and as appears by his graces, operations, and influences; and by his being grieved, speaking after the manner of men, with the sins and impurities of men; the reason of which is, because they are so contrary to his pure and holy nature, that he cannot bear them, but expresses his dislike and displeasure at them, Eph. iv. 29, 30. And all this will be still more clear and manifest, by considering,

II. The instances wherein and whereby the holiness of God is displayed, which are his works, and actions, and proceedings towards his creatures; God is *holy in all his works*; or his holiness is manifest in them, and by them, Psal. cxlv. 17.

1. The holiness of God the Father; which is visible,

1. In the works of creation; for as he made all things by his Son, not as an instrument, but as co-efficient with him, so when he overlooked them, he pronounced them very good; which he would not have done, had there been any thing impure or unholy in them. Angels, not only those that stood, but those that fell, were originally holy, as made by him; the elect angels continue in the holiness in which they were created; and the angels that sinned are not in the estate in which they were at their creation; they *kept not their first estate*, which was an estate of purity and holiness; and *abode not in the truth*, in the uprightness and integrity in which they were formed, Jude 6. John viii. 44. And as for man, he was made after the image, and in the likeness of God, which greatly consisted in holiness; a pure, holy, and upright creature he was; and had a law given him, holy, just, and good, as the rule of his obedience, and which was inscribed on his heart; some remains of which are to be found in his fallen posterity, and even in the Gentiles.

2. In his works of providence; which, though many of them are dark and

intricate, not easily penetrated into, and to be accounted for; yet there is nothing criminal and sinful in them: the principal thing objected to the holiness of God in his providences, is his suffering sin to be in the world; but then, though it is by his voluntary permission, or permissive will, yet he is neither the author nor abettor of it; he neither commands it, nor approves of it, nor persuades to it, nor tempts nor forces to it; but all the reverse, forbids it, disapproves of it, dissuades from it, threatens to punish for it, yea, even chastizes his own people for it; and, besides, over-rules it for great good, and for his own glory; as the fall of Adam, the sin of Joseph's brethren, the Jews crucifixion of Christ; which have been instanced in, and observed under a former attribute; wherefore the dispensations of God, in his providence, are not to be charged with unholiness on this account.

3. In those acts of grace which are peculiar to him; as in choosing some in Christ his Son to everlasting life, before the world began. Now though not the holiness of the creature, nor even the foresight of it, is the cause of this act; yet holiness, or the sanctification of the Spirit, is fixed as a means in it; and it is the will of God, that those whom he chooses and appoints to salvation, should partake of it, or come to salvation through it; nay, he has not only chosen them through it, as a means, but he has chosen them to it, as a subordinate end; he has chosen them to be holy in part, in this life, and perfectly in the life to come; and holiness of heart and life, is the evidence of interest in it, and nothing more powerfully excites and engages to it. The covenant which he has made with his Son Jesus Christ, on the behalf of the chosen ones provides abundantly for their holiness, both internal and external; see Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. and the promises of it serve greatly to promote it, and to influence the saints to be "perfecting holiness, in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. And in this covenant is laid up a rod of correction, in love, to chastize with it the sins of God's people, Psal. lxxxix. 29—34. Justification is an act of God's grace towards them; it is God, even God the Father, that justifies, through the imputation of his Son's righteousness to them; by which the holy law of God is so far from being made void, that it is established, magnified, and made honourable: nor are justified persons exempted from obedience to it, but are more strongly bound and constrained to serve it; and though God justifies the ungodly, yet not without a righteousness provided for them, and imputed to them: nor does he justify, vindicate, or approve of their ungodliness, nor connive at it; but turns it from them, and them from that: and faith, which receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, by which men perceive their interest in it, and enjoy the comfort of it, is an operative grace, works by love to God, to Christ, and his people; and is attended with good works, the fruits of righteousness: the like may be observed with respect to other acts of the Father's grace; as adoption, pardon, &c.

II. The holiness of the Son of God. This is to be seen in all his works; in the works of creation and providence, in common with his divine Father; and in all his works of grace; in giving himself to sanctify his church, and make it a glorious one, without spot or wrinkle, through his blood and righteousness;

n redeeming his people from all iniquity, to purify them to himself a peculiar eople; in bearing their sins, and making satisfaction for them, that they might ve unto righteousness, and that the body of sin might be destroyed, Eph. v. 5, 27. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Rom. vi. 6. and so in the execution of all his ffices; as a Prophet, he has appeared to be an holy one; the faith delivered by im to the saints, is a most holy faith, wholesome words, doctrines according to odliness: as a Priest, he is holy and harmless, separate from sinners, and has ffered up himself without spot to God; and though he makes intercession for ransgressors, it is upon the foot of his sacrifice and righteousness; as a King, l his administrations are in purity and righteousness: and his laws, commands, nd ordinances, are holy ones; and when he comes as judge of the world, he will ppear without sin, and "judge the world in righteousness."

III. The holiness of the blessed Spirit. This is visible in the formation of the uman nature of Christ; in separating that mass out of which it was framed in he virgin; in sanctifying it, and preserving it from the taint and contagion of riginal sin; in filling the human nature, when formed, with his holy gifts and races, and that without measure; and through him it was offered up without pot; and he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the Spirit of holiness, through the resurrection from the dead. Moreover, his holiness is manifest in the sanctification of the chosen of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb, which is therefore called, *the sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Pet. . 2. in convincing them of sin, of the evil nature and just demerit of it; in converting them from it; in calling them with an holy calling, and to holiness; in mplanting principles of grace and holiness in them; in purifying their hearts by faith, through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus; in leading them in the way of holiness, in which men, though fools, shall not err; and in carrying on, and perfecting the work of sanctification in them, "without which none shall see the Lord."

OF THE JUSTICE OR RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

CONCERNING this attribute of God, I shall shew,

I. That it does belong to him, and is natural and essential to him. The scriptures abundantly ascribe it to him: all rational creatures, angels and men, good and bad, acknowledge it in him, Rev. xvi. 5. Exod. ix. 27. Jer. xii. 1. Dan. ix. 9. Psal. cxlv. 7. and remove all unrighteousness from him, and affirm there is none in him, Psal. xcii. 15. Rom. ix. 14. And, indeed, without this attribute, he would not be fit to be the governor of the world, and the judge of the whole earth; his government would be tyranny, and not yield that pleasure and delight to the inhabitants of it, it does; the reason of which is, because *righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne*, Psal. xcvii. 1, 2. And from his love of righteousness, and constant performance of it, it may be concluded it is natural to him; as what is loved by men, and constantly done by them, shews it to be agreeable to the nature of them, Psal. xi. 7. and ix. 4. and, indeed, it is originally and essentially in God; it is in and of himself, and not of another; it is his nature and essence, and is not derived from another. Adam was righteous, but not of himself, God made him upright, or righteous; saints are righteous, not by their own righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. But God is righteous in and of himself; his righteousness is essential and inderivative, and is incommunicable to a creature; it is not that by which men are made righteous, as Osiander dreamed; for though he who is Jehovah is their righteousness, yet not as he is Jehovah; for then they would be deified by him: the righteousness of God being his nature, is infinite and immutable; the righteousness of angels and men, in which they were created, was mutable; Adam lost his, and many of the angels lost theirs; but the righteousness of God is like the great mountains, as high, firm, and stable as they, and much more so, Psal. xxxvi. 6. Righteousness in creatures, is according to some law, which is the rule of it, and to which it is conformed, and is adequate; so the law of God, which is holy, just, and true, is a rule of righteousness to men; but God has no law without himself, he is a law to himself; his nature and will are the law and rule of righteousness to him. Some things are just, because he wills them, as such that are of a positive kind; and others he wills them because they are just, being agreeable to his nature and moral perfections. This is an attribute common to the three Persons in the Godhead, as it must be, since it is essential to Deity, and they partake of the same undivided nature and essence: hence the father of Christ is called by him *righteous Father*, John xvii. 25. and Christ, his Son, is called Jesus Christ *the righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. and no doubt can be made of its being proper to the holy Spirit, who convinces men *of righteousness and of judgment*, John xvi. 8. But,

II. I shall next consider the various sorts, or branches of righteousness, which belong to God; for though it is but one in him, being his nature and essence; yet it may be considered as diversified, and as admitting of distinctions, with respect to creatures. Some distinguish it into righteousness of words, and righteousness of deeds. Righteousness of words lies in the fulfilment of his words, sayings, prophecies, and promises; and is no other than his veracity, truth, and faithfulness; which will be considered hereafter, as a distinct attribute. Righteousness of deeds, is either the rectitude, purity, and holiness of his nature; which appears in all his works and actions, and which has been treated of in the preceding chapter; or it is a giving that which belongs to himself, and to his creatures, what is each their due. So justice is defined by Cicero[u], an affection of the mind, *Suum cuique tribuens*; giving to every one his own. Thus God gives or takes to himself what is his due; or does himself justice, by making and doing all things for his own glory; and by not giving his glory to another, *nor his* praise to graven images: and he gives to his creatures what is due to them by the laws of creation, and governs them in justice and equity, and disposes of them and dispenses to them, in the same manner. Justice, among men, is sometimes distinguished into commutative and retributive. Commutative justice lies in covenants, compacts, agreements, commerce, and dealings with one another, in which one gives an equivalent in money or goods, for what he receives of another; and when integrity and uprightness are preserved, this is justice. But such sort of justice cannot have place between God and men; what he gives, and they receive from him, is of free favour and good will; and what they give to him, or he receives from them, is no equivalent for what they have from him; *What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?* Psal. cxvi. 12. nothing that is answerable to them. Besides, God has a prior right to every thing a creature has or can give; *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?* Rom. xi. 35. Retributive justice is a distribution either of rewards or punishments; the one may be called remunerative justice, the other punitive justice; and both may be observed in God.

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[u] De Finibus, l. 5.

1. Remunerative justice, or a distribution of rewards; the rule of which is not the merits of men, but his own gracious promise; for he first, of his own grace and good-will, makes promises, and then he is just and righteous in fulfilling them; for God, as Austin[w] expresses it, "makes himself a debtor, not by receiving any thing from us, but by promising such and such things to us." And his justice lies in fulfilling his promises made to such and such persons, doing such and such things; and not in rewarding any supposed merits of theirs. Thus, for instance, *The man that endures temptation shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him*, James i. 12. but the crown of life is not given according to any merit of it arising from enduring temptation, or loving the Lord; but in consequence of the promise of God graciously made to such persons, for their encouragement thereunto. Moreover, the reward is not of debt, but of grace; or God, in the distribution of rewards to men, rewards not their works, but his own grace; he first gives grace, and then rewards that grace with glory; called, *the reward of the inheritance*, Col. iii. 24. And this seems to be no other than the inseparable connection between grace and glory, adopting grace, and the heavenly inheritance; which, he having of his own grace put, does in justice inviolably maintain. Indeed, the remunerative justice of God is sometimes represented in scripture, as rendering to every man according to his deeds, or as his work shall be. Rom. ii. 5—10. Rev. xxii. 12. But still it is to be observed, that the reward given or rendered, is owing to the promise that is made to them for godliness, whether as a principle of grace, or as practised under the influence of grace, or godly persons have *the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. which promise is punctually and righteously performed. Besides, God does not reward the works and godly actions of men, as meritorious in themselves; but

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[w] Enarrat. in Psal. cix. tom. 8. p. 521.

as they are the fruits of his own grace; who works in them both *to will and to do* of his own pleasure; and therefore he is *not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love*; which springs from love, is done in faith, and with a view to his glory, Heb. vi. 10. Moreover, the works according to which God renders eternal life, are not mens own personal works; between which, and eternal life, there is no proportion; but the works of righteousness done by Christ, of which his obedience and righteousness consist; and which being done by him, on their account, as their Head and Representative, are reckoned to them; and, according to these, the crown of righteousness is given them by the Lord, as a righteous Judge, in a way of righteousness, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

II. Punitive, or vindictive justice, belongs to God; *It is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble* his people, 2 Thess. i. 6. and so to inflict punishment for any other sin committed by men; and this has been exercised by him in all ages from the beginning of the world; and has appeared in casting down from heaven to hell the angels that sinned; in drowning the old world; in destroying Sodom and Gomorrah; in the plagues on Egypt, on Pharaoh and his host; the righteousness of which was acknowledged, in some of the instances of it, by that wicked king, Exod. ix. 27. in the several captivities of the Jews, and in the destruction of that people; and in the judgments of God on many other nations, in several periods of time; and as will be seen in the destruction of antichrist and the antichristian states; the righteousness of which will be ascribed to God by the angel of the waters, and by all his people, Rev. xvi. 5, 6. and xix. 1, 2. and in the eternal punishment and everlasting destruction of ungodly men: and this righteousness is natural and essential to God; but this the Socinians[x] deny, because they do not choose to embrace the doctrine of the necessity of Christ's satisfaction for sin, which, if granted, they must give into. But that punitive, or vindictive justice, is essential to God, or that he not only will not let sin go unpunished, but that he cannot but punish sin, is manifest, 1. From the light of nature; hence the accusations of the natural conscience in men for sins committed; the fears of divine vengeance falling upon them for it, here or hereafter; the many ways and means devised to appease angry Deity, and to avert punishment, some absurd, and others shocking; to which may be added, the name of δικη, vengeance, or justice, punitive justice, the heathens give to deity; see Rom. ii. 14, 15. Acts xxviii. 4. — 2. From the word of God, and the proclamation which God himself has made; in which, among other essential perfections of his, this is one, that he will by no means clear the guilty, and not at all acquit the wicked. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Numb. xiv. 18. Nahum i. 3. — 3. From the nature of God, "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" cannot bear it, but hates it, and the workers of it; which hatred is no other than his punishment of it, Heb. i. 13. Isai. i. 13, 14. Psal. v. 5, 6. Now as his love of righteousness is natural and essential to him;

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[x] Socin. de Servatore, par. 1. c. 1. Praelection. Theolog. c. 16. Crellius de Deo, ejusque attributis, c. 25. in fine.

so must hatred of sin be; to which may be added, that "he is consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29. — 4. From the nature of sin, and the demerit of it, eternal death, everlasting punishment and destruction. Now if sin of itself, in its own nature, merits such punishment at the hands of God, he is obliged to inflict it; or otherwise there can be no demerit in it. — 5. From the law of God; the sanction of it, and the veracity of God in it: sin is a transgression of the law; which God, as a lawgiver, cannot but punish; otherwise his legislative power and authority is of no effect, and would be despised: he has annexed a sanction to his law, which is death; and his veracity obliges him to inflict it; nor is it any objection to all this, that then all sinners must be necessarily punished; since the perfections of God, though natural to him, the acts and exercises of them are according to his will; as has been instanced in his omnipotence and mercy. Besides, it will be readily allowed, and even affirmed, that no sin goes unpunished; but is either punished in the sinner himself, or in his Surety. The reason why some are not punished in themselves, is, because Christ has made satisfaction for their sins, by bearing the punishment due unto them. Hence, — 6. From sin being punished in Christ, the Surety of his people, it may be strongly concluded, that punitive justice is essential to God; or otherwise, where is the goodness of God to his own Son, that he should not spare him, but awake the sword of justice against him, and inflict the whole of punishment on him, due to the sins of those for whom he suffered, if he could not have punished sin, or this was not necessary? and, indeed, where is his wisdom in being at such an expence as the blood and life of his Son, if sin could have been let go unpunished, and the salvation of his people obtained without it? and where is the love of God to men, in giving Christ for them, for their remission and salvation, so much magnified, when all this might have been without it? but without shedding of blood, as there is no remission, so none could be, consistent with the justice of God; no pardon nor salvation, without satisfaction to that: could it have been in another way, the prayer of Christ would have brought it out, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*, Matt. xxvi. 39. But,

III. I shall next consider the displays of the righteousness of God in his works; and vindicate his justice in them; for *the Lord is righteous in all his ways*, Psal. cxlv. 17.

1. In his ways and works of providence: he governs the world in righteousness, orders and disposes of all things in judgment; and though he does according to his sovereign will and pleasure in heaven and in earth, yet he acts according to the strictest rules of justice and equity; *Just and true* are his *ways*; he is *the Judge of all the earth*, who will *do right*, Rev. xv. 3. Gen. xviii. 25. and does do it; nor is he chargeable with any unrighteousness in any of his ways and works: men may wrongly charge him, and say, as the house of *Israel* did; *the way of the Lord is not equal*; when it is their ways that are unequal, and not his, Ezek. xviii. 29. nor is it any sufficient objection to the righteousness of God in his providences, that good men are often afflicted, and wicked

men are frequently in very prosperous circumstances: these things have been stumbling and puzzling to good men, and they have not been able to reconcile them to the justice of God; see Psal. lxxiii. 4—13. Jer. xii. 1, 2. As for the afflictions God's people, these of are not punishments for sins, but chastizements of them; were they, indeed, punishments for sin, it would argue injustice, for it would be unjust to punish twice for the same sins; once in their Surety, and again in themselves: but so it is not; their afflictions come not from God as a judge, but as a father; and not from his justice, but his love; and not to their detriment and injury, but for their good. In short, they are chastened by the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. xi. 32. And as for the prosperity of the wicked, though their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish, yet they are like beasts that are fattened for the slaughter; their judgment may seem to linger, and their damnation to slumber, but they do not; sudden destruction will come upon them; the tables will, ere long, be turned, and the saints, who have now their evil things, will be comforted; and the wicked, who have now their good things, will be tormented: justice, though it may not so apparently take place now, it will hereafter; when all things will be set to rights, and the judgments of God will be manifest. There is a future state, when the justice of God will shine in all its glory.

11. God is righteous in all his ways and works and acts of grace; in the predestination of men, the choice of some, and the preterition of others. While the apostle is treating on this sublime subject, he stops and asks this question, *Is there unrighteousness with God?* and answers it with the utmost abhorrence and detestation, *God forbid!* Election is neither an act of justice nor of injustice, but of the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who does what he will with is own; gives it to one, and not to another, without any imputation of injustice; if he may give grace and glory to whom he will, without such a charge, then he may determine to give it without any. If it is no injustice in men to choose their own favourites, friends, confidents, and companions; it can be none in God to choose whom he pleases to bestow his favours on; to indulge with communion with himself now, and to dwell with him to all eternity: if it was no injustice to choose some of the angels, called elect angels, and pass by others; and even to condemn all that sinned, without shewing mercy to one individual of them; it can be no injustice in him to choose some of the race of men, and save them; and pass by others, when he could have condemned them all. Nor can the imputation of Adam's sin to all his posterity, be accounted an unrighteous action. God made man upright, he made himself a sinner: God gave him a righteous law, and abilities to keep it; he voluntarily broke it: God constituted the first man the federal head and representative of all his posterity; and who so fit for this as their natural head and common parent, with and in whom they were to stand and fall; and what injustice could be in that; since had he stood, they would have partook of the benefits of it; as

now he fell they share in the miseries of it? and since they sinned in him, it an be no unrighteous thing to reckon it to them; or that they should be made nd constituted sinners, by his disobedience. It is not reckoned unjust, among nen, for children to be punished for the sins of their parents, and particularly reason; and what else is sin against God? Exod. xx. 5. The justice of God hines brightly in redemption by Christ; " Zion, and her converts, are redeemed righteouness;" a full price is paid for the redemption of them; and in it mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other:" nd though it is not for all men, no injustice is done to them that are not redeemd; for if God could in justice have condemned all, it can be no act of injustice redeem and save some. Suppose one hundred slaves in Algiers, and a man ut of his great generosity, lays down a ransom-price for fifty of them, does he, y this act of distinguished goodness and generosity, do any injustice to the thers? or can they righteously complain of him for not ransoming them? In e justification of men, by the righteousness of Christ, the justice of God is ery conspicuous; for though God justifies the ungodly, yet not without a perect righteousness, such as is adequate to the demands of his righteous law; even e righteousness of his own Son, in the imputation of which, and justification y it, he appears to be *just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus,* om. iii. 26. Though God forgives sin, yet not without a satisfaction made to is justice; though it is according to the riches of his grace, yet through the lood of Christ shed for it; and upon the foot of the shedding of that blood, od *is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteusness,* 1 John i. 9. and so it is both an act of grace and of justice; as is eteral glory and happiness, being the free gift of God, through Christ and his ighteousness.

OF THE VERACITY OF GOD.

THE apostle says, *Let God be true, and every man a liar,* Rom. iii. 4. this ust be affirmed of him, whatever is said of creatures, he is true, and truth itelf.

I. God is true in and of himself: this epithet or attribute, is expressive, 1. Of e reality of his being; he truly and really exists: this is what every worhipper of him must believe, Heb. xi. 6. Creatures have but a shadow of being n comparison of his; *Every man walks in a vain shew,* or image; rather in ppearance than in reality, Psal. xxxix. 6. but the existence of God is true, eal, and substantial; hence he has the name *Jehovah, I AM that I AM;* hich denotes the truth, eternity, and immutability of his essence. What eems to be, and is not, is not true; what seems to be, and is, is true. — 2. Of he truth of his Deity; he is the true and the living God; so he is often called, Chron. xv. 3. Jer. x. 10. 1 Thess. i. 9. in opposition to fictitious deities;

who either have feigned themselves such, or are feigned so by others; gods only by name, not by nature; of which there have been many: but the true God is but one, and in distinction from such who are called gods in a figurative and metaphorical sense, gods by office under God; as Moses was to Pharaoh, and as kings, judges, and civil magistrates be, Exod. vii. 1. Psal. lxxxii. 1—7. But the Lord is God in a true and proper sense. — 3. This title includes the truth and reality of all his perfections; he is not only omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, and immutable, but he is truly so: what is falsely claimed by others, or wrongly given to them, is really in him; he is not only good and gracious, holy and just, but he is truly so; what others only appear to be, he is really. — 4. This may be predicated of each Person in the Godhead; the Father is the only true God, John xvii. 3. though not to the exclusion of the Son, who is also the true God and eternal life; nor of the holy Spirit, who is truth; and who, with the Father and the Son, is the one true and living God, 1 John v. 20, 6, 7. — This attribute of truth removes from the divine nature every thing imperfect and sinful: it is opposed to unrighteousness, Deut. xxxii. 4. and has the epithet of just or holy along with it, when God is spoken of in his persons, ways, and works, Rev. iii. 7. and vi. 10. and xv. 3. and xvi. 7. and xix. 2. it removes from him all imputation of lying and falshood; he is not a man, that he should lie, as men do; the Strength of Israel will not lie; yea, he is God that cannot lie; it is even impossible that he should, Numb. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18. this frees him from all deception, he can neither deceive nor be deceived; Jeremiah, indeed, says, *O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived*, Jer. xx. 7. but this must be understood either as a misapprehension and mistake of the prophet; or the sense is, if I am deceived, God has deceived me; but as that cannot be, therefore I am not deceived: though rather the words may be rendered, *thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded*, to enter upon his prophetic office, and to proceed on in the execution of it. Moreover, this attribute clears God of the charge of insincerity, hypocrisy, and dissimulation, which, if in him, he could not be true. Nor on the supposition of his decree to save some men, and not all, are his declarations chargeable with any thing of that kind; as that he has no pleasure in the death of him that dies, and that he will have all men to be saved, Ezek. xviii. 32. 1 Tim. ii. 4. since the former respects not eternal death, but the captivity of the Jews, their return from it, upon their obedience, to their own land, and living in it. And the latter respects the will of God to save some of all sorts, of every rank and condition in life, and particularly Gentiles as well as Jews. In short, it removes all unfaithfulness from God, or any shadow of it: it strongly expresses the faithfulness of God; hence true and faithful are joined together, when the sayings or words of God are spoken of; nor is it any objection to the veracity of God, when what he has promised or threatened is not done; since thereunto a condition is either openly annexed or secretly understood; see Jer. xviii. 7—10. but the faithfulness of God, in his promises, &c. will be distinctly considered hereafter. Concerning the veracity of God, let the following things be observed:

I. That it is essential to him, it is his very nature and essence; he is truth itself; he is not only called the God of truth, but *God the truth*, Deut. xxxii. 4. and so Christ asserts himself to be the *truth*, John xiv. 6. and the Spirit is likewise so called, 1 John v. 6. To be false, fallacious, and insincere, would be to act contrary to his nature, even to deny himself; which he cannot do.

II. It is most pure and perfect in him; as in him is light, and no darkness at all; he is righteous, and no unrighteousness is in him: is holy, and no unholiness in him; is good, and no evil in him; is wisdom, and no folly nor weakness in him; so he is truth, and no falshood in him, nor the least mixture nor appearance of it.

III. It is first, chief, and original in him; it is first in him, as he is the first cause; it is chief, as it is perfect in him, and all truth is originally from him; natural and rational truth, which is clear and self-evident to the mind: as the Being of God, from the works of his hands, called the truth of God made manifest in men, and shewed unto them, Rom. i. 18—25. Moral truth, by which men know, in some measure, though sadly depraved, the difference between moral good, and moral evil, Rom. ii. 14, 15. Spiritual truth, truth in the inward parts, or the true grace of God; and evangelical truth, the word of truth, and the several doctrines of it; these are not of men, but of God. All untruth is from Satan, the father of lies; but all truth is from the God of truth, and from the Spirit, who leads into all truth, as it is in Jesus.

IV. Truth, as in God, is eternal; what is truth now, was always truth with him in his eternal mind; for *known to him are all his works from the beginning*, or from eternity, Acts xv. 18. as also his *word is true from the beginning*, or from eternity, Psal. cxix. 160. What is true with us to-day, might not be true yesterday, and will not be true to-morrow, because things are in a succession with us, and are so known by us; but not so with God, in whose eternal mind all things stand in one view; and besides, as veracity is his nature, his essence, it must be eternal, since that is, which contains all truth in it; and his truth will be to all generations, even for ever, Psal. c. 5. and cxvii. 2.

V. It is immutable and invariable, as he himself, as his nature is; truth does not always appear in the same light to men; at first more obscurely, then more clearly; it has its gradations and increase; but in God is always the same: creatures are mutable, fallacious, and deceitful; but God is the same, true and faithful, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. An attribute on account of which he is greatly to be praised and celebrated, Psal. lxxxix. 5. Isai. xxxviii. 19.

II. God is true in his works; or all his works are true, and his veracity is displayed in them; and these are either internal or external.

1. Internal acts within himself; some relative to himself, to the divine persons, their modes of subsisting, and distinction from each other; as paternity,

filiation, and spiration; which are true and real things: the Father is truly and properly the Father of Christ, and not in name only; and Christ is his own proper Son, not in a figurative sense, or by office, as magistrates are called the children of the most High; but the Son of the Father in truth and love, 2 John 3. and the Spirit of truth is really breathed, and proceeds from the Father and the Son, John xv. 26. others are relative to creatures; the decrees of God within himself, which are the secret actings and workings of his mind, the thoughts of his heart, the deep things of God, his counsels of old, which are faithfulness and truth; truly made, and truly performed, Isai. xxv. 1.

II. External works, as the works of creation, providence, and grace, which are all true, and real things; and in which the veracity of God appears, both in making and in continuing them.

1. The works, of creation, the heavens and the earth, which are both his handy work, and all that are in them; in which the invisible perfections of his nature are displayed and discerned, his eternal power and Godhead, and his veracity among the rest. The heavens above us, the sun, moon, and stars we behold, and the earth on which we live, are real, and not imaginary, they truly exist. Satan pretended to shew to Christ *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,* Matt. iv. 8. but this was a false and delusive representation, a *deceptio visus*, by which he would have imposed on Christ, but could not.

2. The works of providence; those in an ordinary way, by which God governs the world, and disposes of all things according to truth and righteousness; and such as are of an extraordinary kind, as those done by the hands of Moses, in Egypt; and by Christ and his apostles: these were real things, to answer some wise ends and purposes in the world; when those done by the magicians were only in shew, in appearance, and by a sort of legerdemain; as those done by antichrist, in the sight of men, as they imagine, whereby he deceives them that dwell on the earth; and therefore are called lying wonders, feigned things, which have no truth in them, Rev. xiii. 13, 14. 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10. but the wonderful works of God are true, and without deceit, as are all his judgments he executes by the sword, famine, pestilence, &c.

3. The works of grace done by him, his acts of grace, both in eternity and time; his choice of persons to eternal life, is true, firm, and real, the foundation of God, which stands sure; the covenant of grace, made in Christ, full of blessings and promises, faithfully performed; the mission of Christ into the world, and his incarnation, who was really made flesh, and dwelt among men; the truth of which the apostle confirms by the various senses of seeing, hearing, and handling, 1 John i. 1. Justification by his righteousness, is really imputed to his people, and by which they truly become righteous; and not in a putative and imaginary sense; pardon by his blood, which is not merely typical, as by the blood of slain beasts, but real; atonement by the sacrifice of himself, which he really and truly offered up to God; and sanctification by the Spirit, which

is the new man, created in righteousness and true holiness; and not outward, typical, and ceremonial, nor feigned and hypocritical: and adoption, by which the saints are now really the sons of God; though it does not yet appear what they shall be; and to which the Spirit bears a true and real witness; and which is unto an inheritance, real, solid, and substantial.

III. God is true in his words, in his essential Word, his Son, who was in the beginning with God; had a true and real existence with him, and was God, really and truly God; he is true in his person and natures, the true God and eternal life, who took unto him a true body, and a reasonable soul; and whose human nature is the true tabernacle God pitched, and not man: true in his offices he bears; the true prophet raised up and sent of God, the true light, that lightens men in every sense; the true priest, not of the order of Aaron, but of the order of Melchizedek; the true and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords; the true Mediator between God and men, and not a typical one, as Moses.

God is true in his written word; the scriptures are the scriptures of truth, even the whole of them, Dan. x. 21. they are given by inspiration from God, are the breath of God, who is the God of truth, and therefore to be received, *not as the word of man, but as in truth the word of God*, 1 Thess. ii. 13. the law-part of them is truth; the apostle speaks of the truth in the law, known by men, Rom. ii. 20. there is not a precept in it but what is true and right; *The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether*, Psal xix. 9. And the gospel-part of them is eminently the word of truth, Eph. i. 13. and all the doctrines of it, which are *pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times*, Psal. xii. 9. And the truth and veracity of God appears in the fulfilment of the predictions, promises, and threatenings contained in his word, which is the same with his faithfulness; which we shall particularly treat of in the next chapter, being naturally led to it; the veracity of God is the foundation of his faithfulness; and his faithfulness is a branch of that; and they are often put one for the other, and signify the same thing.

OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

FAITHFULNESS is an attribute that belongs to God; from whence he is denominated the *faithful God*, Deut. vii. 9. It is essential to him, and without which he would not be God; to be unfaithful, would be to act contrary to his nature, to deny himself, 2 Tim. ii. 13. an unfaithful God would be no God at all; it is a most glorious perfection of his nature; it is great, like himself; yea, it is infinite; *Great is thy faithfulness*, Lam. iii. 23. it reaches to all persons and things God has any concern with; it is all around him; he is, as it were, clothed and covered with it; and there is none in any creature like unto it, Psal. lxxxix. 8. There is faithfulness in the holy angels, and in good men, but not like what is in God, and therefore he puts no trust in them, Job iv. 18. his faithfulness is invariably the same; it has never failed in any one instance, nor never will; it is established in the heavens, and will continue to all generations, Psal. lxxxix. 2, 24, 33. and cxix. 90. Josh. xxiii. 14. otherwise there would be no firm foundation for trust and confidence in him; but he is the faithful Creator, and covenant-God and Father of his people; to whom they may safely commit themselves, and depend upon him for all mercies promised, both temporal and spiritual, 1 Pet. iv. 19. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. for the faithfulness of God chiefly lies in the performance of his word, which is certain, with respect to all that is spoken by him; for *hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Verily he will, Numb. xxiii. 19. Luke i. 45. And it appears,

I. In the performance of what he has said with respect to the world in general; as, that it shall never more be destroyed by a flood, as it once was; and for a token and confirmation of it, God has set the rainbow in the cloud; and now four thousand years are gone since the covenant was made; and God has been faithful to it, though the earth has been sometimes threatened with destruction by violent storms, and sudden inundations; see Gen. ix. 11—16. Isai. liv. 9. Also that the ordinances of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, shall not depart, but always continue in their being, use, and influence; and now they have kept their course, or station, and have done their office, exactly and punctually, for almost six thousand years; see Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. and xxxiii. 25. Likewise that the revolutions of the time, and seasons of the year, should keep their constant course; that, *while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease*, Gen. viii. 22. and so it has always been, and still is, in one part of the world or another, according to the different climates. Remarkable was the faithfulness of God to the Jewish nation, in that their land required rain only at two seasons of the year, and God promised it to them, and which they always had; though sometimes so ungrateful as not to fear him who gave them *rain, both the former and the latter, in his season*, and *reserved for them the appointed weeks of the harvest*, Jer. v. 24. see Deut. xi. 14, 15. and whereas God has given reason to expect that his creatures should be preserved in their being, and provided for by him, with the necessaries of life; he has not left himself without a witness to his faithfulness, in all ages and nations, giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; and so filling the hearts of his creatures with food and gladness; whose eyes all of them wait upon him, and he gives them their meat in due season, Acts xiv. 17. Psal. xxxvi. 5, 6. and cxlv. 15, 16. And from all this it may be strongly concluded, that whatsoever God has said concerning the world, which is yet to be fulfilled, shall be most certainly done; as the judgment of it, the end and consummation of all things in it, the conflagration of it, and the making new heavens and a new earth, wherein will dwell righteousness, 2 Pet. iii. 7—13.

II. The faithfulness of God appears in the fulfilment of what he has said with respect to Christ, and the salvation of men by him; both of what he has said of him, and of what he has said to him: and, indeed, the faithfulness of God is displayed in Christ as in a mirror.

I. In the performance of what he has said of him; as that he should be born of a woman, be of the seed of Abraham, spring from the tribe of Judah, arise out of the family of David, be born of a virgin at Bethlehem, and converse much in Galilee, Gen. iii. 15. and xxii. 18. and xlix. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. Mic. v. 2. Isai. vii. 14. and ix. 1, 2. and suffer, and die, and work out the salvation of his people, Psal xxii. Isai. liii. and chap. xxv. 9. and xxxv. 4. and xlix. 6. all which has been fully accomplished, Matt. i. 1, 18—23. and ii. 5—23. and iv. 13—16. Luke i. 68—72. 1 Cor. xv. 3.

II. In the performance of what he said to Christ, or promised to him; as that he would help him, and strengthen him, as man and mediator in the great work of redemption and salvation; and which help and strength Christ expected, and believed he should have, and had it, Psal. lxxxix. 21. Isai. l. 7, 9. and xlix. 8. and that though he should die, and be laid in the grave and buried; yet he would raise him from the dead, and that on the third day; and which was accordingly done, Psal. xvi. 10. Hos. vi. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 4. and that when he had done his work, being delivered unto death for the sins of his people, and raised again for their justification, he should be glorified at his right hand, in his human nature; and accordingly, Christ having done his work, pleaded this promise, and it was fulfilled, Psal. cx. 1. John xvii. 4, 5. Phil. ii. 9, 10. and that he should see his seed have a numerous offspring, which should continue to the end of the world, Isai. liii. 10. Psal. lxxxix. 4, 29, 36. and which has been accomplished in the numerous conversions both among the Jews and Gentiles, in the first ages of christianity; and which have continued, more or less ever since; and will still more manifestly appear when the nation of the Jews shall be born at once, and the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in.

III. In the person, office, and works of Christ. This, as all other divine perfections, is common to each person in the Godhead, and shines resplendently in the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, who has every perfection the Father has; so that he that has seen the Son has seen the Father, the same perfections being in the one as in the other, and this of faithfulness among the rest; which is to be seen in Christ as in a mirror, or glass; and an estimate may in some measure be taken, and judgment made of the faithfulness of God, by what appears in his Son; who has been faithful to him that appointed him to his office as Mediator. Moses was faithful in the house of God, as a servant: but Christ as a Son over his own house, Heb. iii. 2—6 and whose faithfulness may be observed,

1. In the performance of his engagements: he engaged to be the Surety of his people; to stand in their place and stead; to do and suffer for them what should be required, and to take care of all their affairs and concerns for time and eternity; and accordingly, he is become the Surety of the better testament,

Heb. vii. 22. he engaged to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; he is often spoken of as such in the Old Testament; that is, as one who had engaged to work out their redemption and salvation; and which he has now obtained, and become the author of, Heb. v. 9. and ix. 12. he engaged to come into the world, in order to do this work, saying, Lo, I come; and he is come, and as done it; and that he came into the world, and as done this for sinners, the chief of sinners, is a faithful saying; in which the faithfulness of God in his promises, and of Christ in his engagements, js abundantly displayed, 1 Tim. i. 15. he engaged to come and fulfil the law, both its precepts and its penalty, and to become a sacrifice for sin; ceremonial sacrifices being insufficient, Psal. xl. 6—8. and he is accordingly become the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to all that believe; and has offered himself, soul and body, without spot to God; "a Sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour;" and whereby sin has been fully expiated and put away, Rom. x. 4. Heb. ix. 14, 26. see Heb. x. 5—10, he engaged to pay off the debts of his people, and by being their Surety, become responsible for them, and to clear off all their scores; which he has done to the uttermost farthing, and blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances against them. In short, he engaged to feed the flock of God, to take the whole care and oversight of it; and he does feed his flock like a shepherd, and has shewn himself to be the good and faithful one, by laying down his life for the sheep, Zech. xi. 4, 7. Isai. xl. 11. John x. 14.

11. In his discharge of the truth reposed in him, which is very large and great; the Father hath *given all things into his hand*, John iii. 35. all the persons of his elect to be kept, preserved, and saved by him; and so they are and shall be, even every one of them; whom Christ will present to his Father, and say, *Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me*; not one is lost, Heb. ii. 13. Christ is intrusted with a fulness of grace, to supply the wants of his people; it has been his Fathers pleasure, that it should dwell in him for their use; he has deposited it with him, to communicate it to them as they need it; and he has been faithful to do it, and in all ages and generations; he has been to all his churches, and to all his saints, in every period of time, *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon*, Cant. iv. 15. saints both of the Old and New Testament, have *all received of his fulness, and grace for grace*, John i. 16. Eternal life and happiness is in his hands, and he has a power to give it to as many as the Father has given him: and he is faithful in the use of that power, and does give it to all his sheep, so that none of them shall ever perish, 1 John v. 11. John xvii. 2. and x. 28. yea, the glory of all the divine perfections, as concerned in the salvation of men, was entrusted with Christ; and he has been faithful in things pertaining to God, as well as in making reconciliation for the sins of the people; and in doing the one he has taken care of the other. The glory of God is great in the salvation of men, even of his justice and holiness; as well as of his wisdom, power, faithfulness, grace, and mercy, Heb. ii. 17. Psal. xx. 5. and lxxxv. 10.

3. In the exercise of his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King: In the exercise of his prophetical office; for which he was abundantly qualified, by lying in the bosom of his Father, and so privy to his whole mind and will, which he has faithfully declared; all that he heard of the Father, all the words and doctrines he gave him, as man, he made known to his disciples; in doing which, he sought not is own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; and therefore must be true and faithful, and no unrighteousness or unfaithfulness in him, John i. 18. and vii. 16—18. and xv. 15. and xvii. 8. and therefore is justly entitled to be called the Amen, and faithful Witness, Rev. iii. 14. In the exercise of his priestly office; in which he is faithful to him that appointed him; and rightly bears the character of a faithful high-priest, in that he has offered up himself to make atonement for the sins of his people; and as the Advocate for them, even Jesus Christ the righteous, faithful, and true; and takes perfect care, in all things, of the house of God, over which he is a priest, Heb. ii. 17. and iii. 1, 2. and x. 21. and ix. 14. 1 John ii. 1. And in the exercise of his kingly office; all whose administrations in it are just and true; righteousness being the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins; and with great propriety is he called *faithful and true*, since *in righteousness he doth judge and make war*, Rev. xv. 3. and xix. 11. Isai. xi. 5.

4. In the fulfilment of his promises, which he made to his disciples; as that he would not leave them comfortless, but come and see them; as he did, after his resurrection, and comforted them with his presence, and filled them with joy at the sight of him, John xiv. 18. and xx. 20. that they should receive the gift of the holy Spirit, and therefore were bid to wait at Jerusalem for it, and where it was bestowed upon them, on the day of Pentecost, in a very large and extraordinary manner, Acts i. 4. and ii. 4, 33. that he would be with them in the administration of his word and ordinances; and accordingly did go forth and work with them, confirming the word by signs following, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 20. yea, he has promised his presence with his ministers and churches to the end of the world, and that even "where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20. and xxviii. 20. and he makes his word good, which the experience of his ministers and people in all ages confirms: he has promised also to come again, and take his disciples and faithful followers to himself, that where he is, they may be also; and which was not only verified in his immediate disciples, but in his saints in all ages, whom, when they have served their generation according to the will of God, he comes and takes them to himself, by death; and "to them that look for him, will he appear a second time, without sin, unto salvation." John xiv. 2, 3. Heb. ix. 28.

5. The faithfulness of Christ may be observed in his concern with the covenant of grace, and the promises of it; the covenant was made with him as the Head and Representative of his people, and stands fast with him; all the blessings of it are lodged with him, and faithfully dispensed by him; the promises

were made to him, who only actually existed when they were made, and to whom only they could be given; he was the Amen, and faithful Witness of them, of their being made; and they are Yea and Amen in him; by whose blood the blessings and promises of it are ratified and confirmed; and therefore, called, "the blood of the everlasting covenant:" and it is in and through him that believers come to have an interest in the promises, a right unto them, and to be partakers of them, Psal. lxxxix. 3, 24. Rev. iii. 14. 2 Cor. i. 20. Heb. xiii. 20. Eph. iii. 6. And now by the faithfulness of Christ thus manifestly displayed, may be learnt somewhat more of the attribute of faithfulness, as it is in God. Which leads on to consider,

III. The faithfulness of God in the performance of what he has said in the covenant, and the promises of it, with respect to his special people. God is denominated faithful, from his keeping covenant and mercy with them, Deut. vii. 9. every covenant God has made with man, he has been faithful in: he made a covenant with Adam, as the head and representative of his posterity, promising a continuance of happiness to him, and his, provided he remained in his state of innocence; and threatening with death, in case of disobedience. Adam was unfaithful and broke the covenant; *they, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant*, Hos. vi. 7. But God was faithful to it, and deprived him of his happiness, and pronounced the sentence of death on him and his. God made a covenant with Noah, and all the creatures, promising that he would no more destroy the world by a flood; and he has faithfully kept it, as before observed. He made a covenant with Abraham, that he would make him the father of many nations, and that kings should spring from him, and that he would give to his posterity the land of Canaan: the former part of which was verified in the Ishmaelites, Israelites, Edomites, Midianites, and others, with their kings, which were of him: and the latter part, by putting the people of Israel in possession of Canaan, by Joshua; which they held long by the tenure of their obedience, according to his promise; but when they broke the covenant, he destroyed them from it, as he threatened, Gen. xvii. 5, 6. Josh. xxi. 43. and xxiii. 16. He made a covenant at Sinai, with all the people of Israel; and, according to his engagements, continued to them their blessings, natural, civil, and religious; but they were not stedfast in his covenant, and he dispossessed them of them. But the grand and principle covenant, is the covenant of grace; which God has made in Christ with all his elect, and is ordered in all things, and sure; and which he will never break, and they cannot; and which will never be removed, but ever be inviolably kept; and there are promises of various sorts, which God has graciously made to his people, and which are faithfully performed by him.

1. Some of a temporal nature; for godliness and godly men have *the promise of the life that now is*, of things belonging to it, as well as *of that which is to come*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. these their heavenly Father knows they have need of, and therefore provides them for them, and promises them unto them. He has said, *that they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing*, Psal. xxxiv. 10. they

shall have that which is good, as every creature of God is good, good food and good raiment; though it may be but mean, yet it is good, and better than the best of men deserve; and they want not any, that God, in his infinite wisdom sees is good for them; for though they and others may think it would be better for them if they had a greater affluence of the things of this life; but God thinks otherwise, and knows it would be to their hurt, as sometimes riches are: he has bid his people, *trust in the Lord, and do good,* and has promised, they *shall be fed,* Psal. xxxvii. 3. not all of them with dainties and delicious food, but with food convenient for them; he has assured them, their *bread shall be given them,* and their *waters shall be sure,* Isai. xxxiii. 16. and this is sufficient to support and confirm his faithfulness: nor is the poverty of some of God's people any objection to it, since he has no where promised them the riches of this world, and has given them no reason to expect them; but he has promised them better riches, durable riches, and righteousness, the riches of grace and glory, and these he gives to them; see a testimony from David's experience of the faithfulness of God, with respect to temporal things, Psal. xxxvii. 25. God has not promised his people security from outward afflictions; but rather has suggested to them that they may look for them; since his people are described as a poor and afflicted people; and it is their common case; many are the afflictions of the righteous; it is what they are appointed to, and what are appointed for them; but then God has promised that they shall work for their good; either for their temporal good, as Jacob's afflictions worked for his; or for their spiritual good, the exercise and increase of grace and holiness; and always for their eternal good, 2 Cor. iv. 17. and also that he will be with them in them, support them under them, and deliver out of them in due time: all which is faithfully performed by him, 1 Cor. x. 13.

11. Others are of a spiritual nature; and the principal of these is, and which is the sum of the covenant, *They shall be my people, and I will be their God,* Jer. xxxii. 38. and which appears in their election, redemption, and effectual vocation; which is saying, that he has a special love and affection for them, and will continue it, as he does: nor are his chastizements of them, his hiding his face from them for a time, his displeasure at them, and being angry with them, any objection to the perpetuity of his love; since these are not contrary to it, but rather the fruits of it, and for their good: it signifies, that they shall have his gracious presence with them, and may expect it, and which they have; nor do their doubts, and fears, and complaints disprove it, Isai. xli. 10. and xlix. 14—16. which are generally owing to their ignorance and unbelief; God is with them, and they know it; however, he is never far from them, nor long; he does not depart from them, nor withdraw his gracious presence from them totally and finally: it assures them of his protection, that he will be all around them, guard them, and secure them, preserve and keep them by his power, through faith unto salvation, as he does; for though they may fall into sin, yet they rise again

by his grace; and though they fall into temptation, and by it, yet they are delivered out of it; they are kept from a final and total falling away; they are not of them that draw back unto perdition: in a word, this promise is expressive of their enjoyment of God here, and for evermore: and he is their shield, and exceeding great reward; their portion in life, at death, and for ever; their ALL in ALL.

There are many particular spiritual promises made to the people of God; and which are made good by him; as, that he will sprinkle clean water upon them, and cleanse them from all their sins; which is to be understood of justifying grace, through the blood of Christ; that he will forgive their iniquities, and remember their sins no more; and he is just in doing it, upon the account of the blood of his Son, and faithful to his own promise, 1 John i. 9. that he will give them new hearts and new spirits, which he does in regeneration; and take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh; as he does, when he removes the hardness of the heart, and gives evangelical repentance unto life; that he will put his laws in them, and write them in their minds; not only give knowledge of them, but both a disposition and grace to observe them; working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure: that he will put his Spirit into them, and give them spiritual strength to keep his statutes, and perform every duty; that he will carry on his good work of grace in them, and perform it, until the day of Christ; of which they may be confident, since he has promised it; that he will give them more grace, a sufficiency of it, and supply all their need out of the fulness in Christ; and that his fear shall be continually in their hearts; and they shall not depart from him, but persevere in faith and holiness to the end. All which promises, and more, are faithfully and truly performed in all his people; see Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. and xxxii. 38—40. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27.

III. There are other promises which respect the life to come; the eternal happiness of the saints in another world; the apostle speaks of the promise of this, as the promise, by way of eminency, as if it was the only promise, or, however, the principal one, in which all others issue and end; *This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life*, 1 John ii. 25. and this is an ancient one, made before the world began, and by God, that *cannot lie*, Tit. i. 2. who is faithful and true, and will most certainly perform it; wherefore, *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*, James i. 12.

IV. The faithfulness of God appears in fulfilling his threatenings, as well as his promises. God threatened Adam, that in the day he eat of the forbidden fruit he should surely die; and he immediately became mortal, death began at once to work in him; his soul was seized directly with a spiritual or moral death, guilt, and terror of conscience, a sense of divine wrath, and deprivation of the divine presence, and he became liable to eternal death; nor had he any reason to expect any other, until he heard that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; and the sentence of death passed on him, and all his posterity in him, as soon as he had sinned, according to the divine threatening, Rom. v. 12. God threatened the inhabitants of the old world with a flood to destroy them, for their impiety and wickedness; and though his patience and forbearance were for a long time exercised, yet he was faithful to his word, and brought it upon the world of the ungodly, and destroyed them all. God threatened the people of Israel with captivity, and other judgments, if they walked not in his ways, and broke his statutes; of which see Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. all which grievous threatenings, and sore judgments, have been exactly fulfilled in that people, and remain to this day; who are a standing proof of God's faithfulness in this respect. And as God has threatened men with the burning of the world, and the works of it, and the wicked in it; and damnation to all unbelieving and impenitent sinners, they may be assured of it, and expect it; for as it is most true, and may be depended upon, that *he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*; so it is equally as true, and as surely to be depended on, that *he that believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark xvi. 16. Nor is it any objection to the faithfulness of God, in fulfilling his threatenings, that Nineveh was spared, when it was threatened, that in forty days it should be overthrown; since there was a condition implied, a secret proviso made, "except they repented;" and which their hope of mercy, and the mercy shown them upon their repentance, fully confirm; and so the veracity and faithfulness of God is sufficiently secured; and, indeed, in many promises and threatenings, respecting temporal things, a condition is either openly expressed, or secretly understood; according to which God in providence proceeds, Jer. xviii. 7—10.

OF THE SUFFICIENCY AND PERFECTION OF GOD.

FROM this attribute of God, he has one of his names, Shaddai, which signifies, who is sufficient, or all-sufficient. Three things may be observed under this attribute.

I. That God is a self-sufficient Being, and needs not any thing from without himself to support himself, or to make himself happy. He is the first of Beings, the first and the last; before him there was no God formed, nor will be any after him; from everlasting to everlasting he is God; and therefore his existence is not owing to any; nor has he received any assistance or support from any; being self-sufficient, he must be self-subsistent; as he existed of himself, and subsisted in and of himself, millions and millions of ages, even an eternity, inconceivable to us, alone, before any other existed, he must be self-sufficient, and as then, so to all eternity[r]. He is an infinite and all-comprehending Being; to what is infinite nothing can be added: if any thing was wanting in him he would be finite; if there was any excellency in another, which is not in him, he would not be infinite, and so not God: being infinite, he is incomprehensible by others; and comprehends in himself all excellencies, perfections, and happiness; and therefore self-sufficient; *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? for of him, and through him, and for him are all things*, Rom. xi. 35, 36. God is the *summum bonum*, the chief good, and has all that is good in him; he is good essentially, originally, and inderivately; the source and fountain of all goodness; every good and perfect gift comes from him, James i. 17. and therefore must have a fulness of goodness in him sufficient for himself, as well as for his creatures, and can receive nothing from them; otherwise he would not be the independent Being he is: all have their dependence on him, and owe their being, and the preservation of it to him; but he depends on none; which he would, if he stood in need of, or received any thing from them. He is possessed of all perfections, as has been abundantly shewed in the preceding chapters, and is sufficiently happy in them; he is perfect and entire, wanting nothing, and therefore self-sufficient[z]: he is the Fountain, creatures, and what they have, are streams; and it would be as absurd for him to need them, or any thing from them, as for the fountain to need its streams. Besides, God in his divine persons, God, Father, Son, and Spirit, have enough within themselves, to give the utmost, yea, infinite complacency, delight, and satisfaction among themselves, and to one another, and had before any creatures were made, and would have had if none had been made, and so ever will; the Father delighted in the Son, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person;" the Son in the Father, before whom he was always rejoicing, when as yet no creature existed; and both in the blessed Spirit, proceeding from them; and he in them, see Prov. viii. 30. for creation adds nothing at all to the perfection and happiness of God, nor makes the least alteration in him. It is indeed said, *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. but pleasure there does not signify delight, satisfaction, and happiness; as if they were made for the sake of that in God; to add unto it, and increase it; but the good will and pleasure of God; it is *δια το θελημα σου*, and should be rendered, *by thy will they are and were created:* God has made all things for himself: that is, for his glory, his manifestative glory; but then this adds nothing to his essential glory and happiness; the heavens, and so the other parts of the creation, declare his glory; but to whom? not to himself, he needs no such declaration; he knows perfectly his own glory, which is always invariably the same; but to angels and men, that they may contemplate it, and receive benefit by it. The invisible perfections of God, his eternal power and Godhead, are seen and understood by the things that are made; but not by God himself, who needs no such glass to view them in; but by men; and the design thereof is, to make some better and happier, and others inexcusable. All creatures stand in need of God to supply them and support them; they consist in him, are upheld by the word of his power, live, and move, and have their beings in him; but he stands in need of none of them, being self-sufficient.

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[r] το αριϛον εχοντα ζωην και την αυταρκεϛατην διατελει τον απαντα αιωνα, Aristot. de Coelo, l. 1. c. 9. and this name, he says, is divinely pronounced by the ancients.

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[z] το γαρ τελειον αυταρκες ειναι δοκει, Aristot. Ethic. l. 1. c. 5.

And as he does not stand in need of the creation in general, so not of men and angels in particular; not of men, nor of any services of theirs, which can add nothing to his perfection and happiness; not of their worship, for he is *not worshipped with mens hands, as though he needed any thing*[a], no not their worship, Acts xvii. 25. he is and ought to be the sole object of their worship; it is their duty to worship him, and that in a spiritual manner, suitable to his nature as a Spirit; but then not he, but they are the gainers by it; the ordinances of divine service under the former dispensation were, and those under the present are, for the instruction edification, comfort and peace of the worshippers, who are hereby led into communion with God, and the enjoyment of his gracious presence; and so find it is good for them to wait upon him in them. But what benefit does he receive thereby? he stands in no need of their prayers; it is both their duty and privilege to pray to him, the God of their life, for the mercies of it, temporal and spiritual; and he is pleased to express his approbation of it, and to resent a contrary behaviour: but who has the advantage of it? not he, but they; for whose sake is the throne of grace set up? not for his own sake, but for the sake of his people, that they may come to it and find grace and mercy to help them in their time of need: nor does he want their praises, nor is he benefited by them; they are his due, and it becomes men to give them to him; and he condescends to accept of them, and express his well-pleasedness in them: but then the celebration of his praises adds nothing to his perfection and happiness, but to the perfection and happiness of men, who are made better thereby: nor is the obedience and righteousness of men of any profit to God; obedience to his commands ought to be yielded, and works of righteousness enjoined by him ought to be performed: but then when we have done all we can, we are but *unprofitable servants* to him; *if thou be righteous what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?* such works and such righteousness may be profitable to men, and is a reason why they are to be done; but *can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself*, or others? *is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?* Job xxii. 2, 3. and xxxv. 7, 8. Luke xvii. 10. Tit. iii. 8. Should it be said, that God is glorified by men in the worship of him, by prayer to him, and praising of him; by obedience to his will, and by living soberly, righteously and godly, John xv. 9. Matt. v. 16. it is very true, these make for the manifestation and display of his glory among men, but make no addition to his essential glory and happiness: the same may be said of the worship and services of angels, of the imperfection and unprofitableness of which to God they are sensible themselves, and blush and cover their faces whilst performing them,

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[a] It is a notion of the heathens themselves, that God stands in no need of any thing; αυτο μεν γαρ το θειον ανενδεες, Salluſt. de Diis, c. 15. θεων μεν ιδιον ειναι μηδενος δεισθαι, Diogenes apud Laert. l. 6. in Vita Menedem.

Isai. vi. 2, 3, and though they are indeed made use of as instruments in providence (but not in creation) in the preservation of God's people, and in the destruction of their enemies, and in other affairs of this world, yet not of necessity, but of choice; it is not because God needs them, and cannot do without them, but because it is his will and pleasure; just as he makes use of the ministry, and ministers of the word, for the conversion of sinners and comfort of saints; not that he needs them, nor could not convert the one and comfort the other without them; for it is certain he can, and often does, but because these are the means and instruments he chooses to make use of, 1 Cor. iii. 5—7.

There is a very remarkable expression in Psal. xvi. 2, 3. *My goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight:* which if spoken by David of himself only, indeed confirms what has been before asserted, that the goodness of men, even of the best of men, is of no advantage to God himself, but to others. The goodness of David in preparing for the building of the temple, and providing for the worship of God in it, in composing hymns and psalms to be sung by men, and in the whole of his life and conversation, was of no avail to the essential happiness of God; but was of use to the saints, both for their profit and by way of example to them: but if spoken by him in the person of Christ, as it is clear the words are, then they carry in them an higher sense still; as, that the holiness of Christ, as man, added nothing to the perfection of God and his nature; that the obedience he yielded in it was for the sake of men, who had the advantage of it, and not God; that the satisfaction he made to divine justice for his people, God stood in no need of; he could have glorified his justice in the destruction of them, as well as in the apostate angels, the old world, and Sodom and Gomorrah: though the debt of obedience paid to the law, and the debt of punishment paid to justice in their room, has magnified the law and made it honourable; the benefit of this redounds to men only; who hereby have their debts paid, their scores cleared, and they stand free and discharged in open court. Though the glory of God is greatly displayed in salvation by Christ, the good will is to men; and all the good things he is come an high priest of, and that come thereby, come not to God, but to men; as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life. God is then a self-sufficient being, and needs nothing from without himself; nor does he receive any thing.

II. God is an all-sufficient Being, and has enough within himself to communicate to his creatures. He is able to do whatsoever he pleases, to fulfil all his engagements and promises, and to do exceeding abundantly above all that men ask or think. And so communicative and diffusive is his goodness, that it extends to all his creatures, and every good and perfect gift comes from him; which is a proof of his all-sufficiency: and which appears,

1. In his gifts of nature and providence; for he *gives life and breath, and all things* to his creatures, Acts xvii. 25. A painter may paint as near to life as can be, and a sculptor may give a statue its just features, and frame its limbs in

proper symmetry and proportion, but neither of them can give life and breath; but God is sufficient to do this, and has done it: he breathed into Adam the breath of life; and gives life to all his posterity; and is, with great propriety, called the God of their life, Psal. xlii. 8. and he is sufficient to support, maintain, and preserve the life he has given, and does, as long as he pleases, Job x. 12. and xii. 10. Psal. lxvi. 9. and to provide for men all the necessaries of life, as food and raiment; which Jacob was fully satisfied of, and therefore covenanted with God for them, Gen. xxviii. 20. and to take care of all the creatures; the fowls of heaven, and of the mountains; the beasts of the field and forest; and "the cattle on a thousand hills;" which, as they are his property, they are his care; and a large family they be to provide for every day, and food suitable to them; and yet this he is sufficient to do, and does; all wait upon him, and he gives them their portion of meat in due season, Psal. l. 10, 11. and civ. 27, 28. and cxlv. 15. and cxlvii. 9. yea, he is sufficient to govern the whole world; nor does he need any wisdom, counsel, advice, and assistance in it, from any of his creatures, Isai. xl. 13, 14. he disposes and over-rules all things as he pleases; and not only influences, directs, and manages, in matters of the greatest importance, which concern kings and governors, kingdoms and states, but even those of the lowest consideration and use; and so in all things intervening, or of a class between the one and the other, Psal. xxii. 28. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Matt. x. 29, 30. in a view of which it may well be said, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* &c. What an all-sufficiency must he be possessed of! Rom. xi. 33.

II. God appears to be all-sufficient in the communications of his grace; he is the God of all grace, and is able to cause all grace to abound towards his people, and to supply all their wants out of that rich and glorious plenitude, and all-sufficiency in himself, by Jesus Christ; he has stored the covenant with all the blessings of grace; he has prevented Christ, the head and mediator of it with all the blessings of goodness; he has blessed his people in him with all spiritual blessings, and given them grace in him before the world began; and caused the fulness of it to dwell in him, which is always sufficient for them, sufficient for them in all ages and periods of time; for them of all nations and kingdoms throughout the world; for them in every state and condition of life; for all believers, weak or strong: and he has a sufficiency of it for all saving purposes; for their acceptance with God, and justification before him; for the remission of their sins, and the cleansing of their souls, and for the supply of all their wants whilst they are in this state of imperfection; and he has a sufficiency of it to communicate to them at all times, when they are called to service, ordinary or extraordinary, to do or suffer for his name's sake: in times of affliction, temptation, desertion, and in the hour of death, to bear up under, and carry them through all, and bring them safe to his kingdom and glory, John i. 14, 16. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Phil. iv. 19.

III. God is a perfect Being; entirely perfect, and wanting nothing; *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*, Matt. v. 48. his nature is perfect: the more simple and uncompounded any being is, the more perfect it is. God is a Spirit, *actus simplicissimus*, the most pure, spiritual, simple, and uncompounded Being, and therefore the most perfect. No perfection of Deity is wanting in him; as appears from what has been under consideration. There is a fulness of the Godhead which dwells in Christ, and the same therefore must be in each divine person, and especially in God, essentially considered; and every attribute of his is perfect; he is perfectly immutable; there is no variableness in him, nor shadow of turning, James i. 17. he is perfect in knowledge, knows himself, and all creatures and things perfectly, Job xxxvii. 16. and there is a depth in his wisdom, as well as in his knowledge, which are unfathomable, Rom. xi. 33. and as for his power, nothing is too hard for him; nor is his hand shortened that it cannot save, Isai. xl. 26, 28. and lix. 1. and his holiness is without the least tarnish; in him are light, purity, and holiness, and no darkness of sin at all, 1 John i. 5. all the perfections and excellencies that are in creatures, angels, and men, are, in the most perfect manner, in him, agreeable to his nature; as they must, since they all come from him, James i. 17. and though there are some things which are excellencies in creatures, as the reasoning faculty in men, and faith in the christian, which properly speaking, cannot be said to be in God; yet these are such as would be imperfections in him; since the former supposes some want of knowledge, which the reasoning power is employed to find out, and the latter is but an obscure knowledge, and proceeds upon the authority of another; neither of which can be supposed in God, whose knowledge is clear and perfect, and to whom no authority is superior; and therefore the want of them does not infer any imperfection in him, but, on the contrary, the highest perfection. Once more, he is a rock, and *his work is perfect*, Deut. xxxiii. 4. his work of creation is finished, and so is the work of redemption, and, ere long, the mystery of providence will be finished, and the work of grace on the heart of every one of his elect; and *as for God is way is perfect*, Psal. xviii. 30. his ways of providence are without any just blame; every path of mercy and truth he pursues, he never leaves till he has finished it; and the way he prescribes to his people to walk in, is perfect; and the scriptures, which are of him, are able to make the man of God perfect, Rev. xv. 4. Psal. xxv. 10. and xix. 7. 2 Tim. i. 16, 17.

OF THE BLESSEDNESS OF GOD.

THAT the nature of God is most blessed, as well as eternal, Epicurus himself asserted; and Velleius, an Epicurean, in Cicero[b], is [illegible] to say, that nothing can be thought of more blessed than the life of God, nor more abounding with all good things; he rejoices in his own wisdom and virtue, and assuredly knows that he ever shall be in the highest and eternal pleasures: this God, says he, we

[b] De Natura Deorum, l. 1.

rightly call blessed; though he wrongly represents him as neither doing nor designing any thing. Euryphamus, a Pythagorean philosopher, more clearly expresses himself; God, says he[c], needs no external cause; for he is φυσει, by nature good, and φυσει, by nature blessed, and is of himself perfect. From this attribute of blessedness the scriptures often stile God the *blessed* One, and *the blessed God*; Christ is called, *the Son of the Blessed*, Mark xiv. 61, 62. the Creator of all things is said to be, *God blessed for ever*, Rom. i. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 31. 1 Tim. i. 11. and Christ, as a divine person, is so called, Rom. ix. 5. and nothing is more common with the Jews, in their writings and prayers, than to speak of God as the holy and blessed God. This attribute may be strongly concluded from the last treated of; for if God is a sufficient, and self-sufficient, and an all-sufficient Being, he must be happy; as well as from all the perfections of God put together, before discoursed of; his simplicity, immutability, infinity, eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, justice, holiness, truth, and faithfulness, all-sufficiency and perfection: he that is possessed of all these, and and in whom no perfection is wanting, must needs be completely blessed. It might be argued from his sovereign, extensive, and endless power and dominion: and from that light, glory, and majesty with which he is arrayed; by all which he is described, 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. *who is the blessed and only potentate*, &c. he is a potentate, has power over others, but is not under the power of any; he is higher than the highest, the most high God; he is over angels and men; he rules in his own right, in right of creation; not by a delegated power; *who hath given him charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?* Job xxxiv. 13. he has the charge of the earth, and disposes of the whole world, and all persons and things in it; but has his authority for it of himself, and not another; he has no rival, competitor, nor partner with him in his throne; he is not accountable to any, nor to be controuled by any; he is *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; and so most blessed and happy as a potentate; and as such will always continue. *Who only hath immortality* of himself, and gives it to others: and what mars the happiness of the greatest potentates on earth is, that they must and do die, like other men, Psal. lxxxii. 6, 7. and such is his light and splendor he is clothed with, so striking and dazzling, that none can bear to come unto it, and gaze upon it; *dwelling in the light* of his own essence; for he is light itself; and such is his glory and terrible majesty, as, that *no man can approach unto*; *whom no man hath seen, nor can see*: and which glory arises not from any single perfection of his, as his holiness, or any other, but from an assemblage of them all; see Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. and xxxiv. 6, 7. In which glory lies his compleat and perfect happiness; and which he gives not to another. The blessedness of God may be considered,

I. As it is in himself; and lies chiefly in these two things, in a freedom from all evils, and in the possession of all good things.

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[c] Fragment. ad Calcem, Laert.

1. In a freedom from all evils[d]; particularly, from the evil of evils, sin; and so from all the consequences of it. Sin is an evil and bitter thing in its own nature; it is exceeding sinful, and extremely pernicious; it is the source of all disorders, disasters, distresses and calamities that befall any of the creatures; sin has made some of the angels, and Adam and his posterity, once in a most happy state, exceeding unhappy; and it is the infelicity of good men, in the present state, that sin dwells in them, which wars against them, breaks their peace and comfort, and mars their happiness, and obliges them to say, *O wretched men that we are!* but God is just and true, there is no iniquity in him, Deut. xxxiii. 4. no darkness of this kind at all to eclipse his light, glory, and felicity: as holiness is the happiness of the elect angels, and glorified saints, who, being thoroughly holy, are completely happy; so even the most consummate and perfect holiness, is the happiness of God;, yea, he is so happy as not to be tempted with the evil of sin, nor can be, James i. 13. whereas good men, in the present state, are often sadly harrassed, and made unhappy by Satan's temptations; being sifted by him as wheat is sifted; and so much trouble is given them, by being buffeted by him, and having his fiery darts thrown at them; but God is out of the reach of all; and as he is not affected with sin, nor can be tempted to it, so he is clear from all the evil consequences of it, all hurts and damages by it.

Such is his knowledge of all things, that he cannot make choice of any thing that will be to his detriment; men, through ignorance, mistaking one thing for another, choose what is abominable, and issues in their hurt and ruin: and such is his wisdom, that he cannot be imposed upon, circumvented, deceived, and drawn into any thing that may make him unhappy; as Eve was, through the subtlety of the serpent; but *there is no wisdom; nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord*, Prov. xxi. 30. and such is his power, that he cannot be overcome, nor oppressed by any: with respect to men, there is, oftentimes, *power on the side of their oppressors*, to crush and distress them, and make them unhappy; but there is no power superior to the divine Being, to do him the least hurt, or give him the least uneasiness. It has been observed, that properly speaking, there are no affections and passions in God to be wrought upon, or worked up, so as to disturb or disquiet him, as there are in creatures; such as grief and sorrow indulged, and wrath and anger provoked, and raised to a pitch; these are only ascribed to God, speaking after the manner of men; and because some things are done by God similar to what are done by men, when they are grieved and provoked to wrath, &c. otherwise, he is invariably and unchangeably the same, and so most blessed for evermore.

II. His blessedness lies in the possession of all good. He has all good in him; he comprehends all that can be called good; he stands in no need of any thing; he is perfect and entire, wanting nothing; he is the fountain of all goodness; all good things come from him; he gives all things richly to enjoy; he is good, and does good, yea, he is good to all; he gives to all, and receives from none; and therefore must be happy; for "it is more blessed to give than receive," according to the saying of Christ, Acts xx. 35. he is the *summum bonum*, the chief, the chiefest good; in whom only happiness is to be found; when all nature is surveyed, and every place and thing searched into, it can be thought to be in God only, and he is found to be that; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee*, Psal. lxxiii. 25. Such and such persons, in such and such circumstances, may be thought to be happy; but happy, thrice happy, are the people whose God is the Lord! who, besides the good things he bestows on them here, he has laid up such goodness for them hereafter, which the heart of man cannot conceive of. How blessed and happy must he himself be! name whatsoever it may be thought happiness consists in, and it will be found in God in its full perfection. Does it lie in grandeur and dominion? with God is terrible majesty; he is the blessed and only potentate; his kingdom rules over all, and is an everlasting one. Does it lie in wealth and riches? *The Gold is mine, and the Silver is mine, saith the Lord*, Hag. ii. 8. all the gold and silver in the world, that, and all the fullness of it are his; the riches of both Indies are his property; the mines and metals of the earth, the fowls of the heaven, the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills," in the latter of which the substance of men formerly lay, Psal. xxiv. 1. and l. 10—12. Does it lie in wisdom and knowledge where Solomon sought for happiness, and had of all men the greatest share of it? these are in God in the highest perfection; *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* Rom. xi. 33. Does it lie in might, power, and strength, as Sampson's excellency did? God is *mighty in strength: if I speak of strength*, says *Job*, *lo, he is strong*; there is no strength nor power comparable to his; *Who is a strong Lord like unto thee?* Job ix. 4, 19. Psal. lxxxix. 8. Does it lie in pleasure; in which also Solomon sought for it, but found it not? *In the presence of God is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore*, Psal. xvi. 11. and if such as to make his creatures happy, angels and men, then certainly to make himself happy also. Does it lie in fame, in credit, and the high esteem of others? How excellent is the name of God in all the earth! his works praise him, his saints bless him, angels celebrate his glory; yea, his glory is above the heavens; his name is great from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.

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[d] So the Stoics say of God, that he is perfect and intellectually happy; κακου παντος ανεπιδεκτον unsusceptible of any evil. Laert. l. 7. in Vita Zeno.

To happiness knowledge is necessary; whatever excellencies may be in creatures, if they know them not, they are not happy in them. Hence happiness is denied of brutes; for though there are many things which they excel in, as strength, swiftness, &c. as the horse and the mule, yet being without understanding, are not happy: but God knows all the excellencies and perfections in his nature; there is no searching of his understanding, and therefore most happy. That happiness is the greatest which is independent; the happiness of angels and men is dependent on God; they have nothing but what they have received, and therefore cannot glory, as though they received it not; and this is a restraint upon, and a limitation of their happiness: but the happiness of God is infinite and independent; of him, and through him, and for him, are all things, Rom. xi. 36. Add to this, that his blessedness endures for ever; he is God blessed for ever, from everlasting to everlasting: could his happiness cease, or be known that it would, it would detract from it, even for the present; but this can no more cease than his Being.

II. What may serve further to prove and illustrate the blessedness of God, is, that he is the cause of all blessedness in his creatures, angels and men. Angels have their beings from him; it is he that has made them the spirits they are, and what excellencies, as of wisdom, knowledge, strength, &c. they have, are all from him; that they are chosen in Christ, and confirmed by grace in him, see the face of God, and enjoy his favour, in which their greatest blessedness lies, all flow from his sovereign will and pleasure. The temporal happiness of men is from him; that they have a being, are preserved in it, and have all the necessaries and comforts of life; that they are blessed in basket and store; that they have health and wealth, and an increase in their families, flocks and herds; on account of which it behoves them to say, *Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits*, Psal. lxviii. 19. Their spiritual blessings come from him, who is himself their covenant-God and Father, the chief of their blessings, and therefore cannot want any good thing, nor need fear any evil: they have Christ, and all the blessings of goodness with him: the Spirit, and all his graces, faith, hope, and love, joy and peace; the blessings of pardoning grace, and a justifying righteousness, and in which their blessedness greatly lies, and from whence peace and comfort flow, Rom. iv. 6—8. and v. 1, 11. They are blessed also with the word and ordinances; which are the means of increasing grace, and spiritual peace; and hereafter will be blessed with eternal happiness; with the blessed hope, or the blessedness laid up in heaven, they are hoping for, which they enter upon at death, and enjoy to all eternity. Now if such blessedness comes from God, how blessed must he be in himself!

III. God is his own blessedness; it is wholly within himself and of himself: he receives none from without himself, or from his creatures; nothing that can add to his happiness; and he himself is the blessedness of his creatures, who are made happy by him; whose blessedness lies in likeness to him; which is begun in this life, in regeneration; when new born souls are made partakers of the divine nature, is increased by sights of the glory of God in Christ, and will be perfected in the future state, when they shall awake in his likeness, and bear his image in a more perfect manner; and also it lies in communion with God; it is the happiness of saints now, and what they exult in, when they enjoy it, that their fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ; and it will be the blessedness of the new Jerusalem-state, that the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell with them; and of the ultimate glory the saints shall then have, everlasting and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and partake of endless pleasures in the divine presence: and it will, more-ever, lie in the vision of God: which, because of the happiness of it, is usually called the beatific vision; when they shall "see God for themselves, and not another;" see him as he is in Christ, and behold the glory of Christ; see no more darkly through a glass, but face to face, and know as their known. Wherefore,

IV. God is pronounced, declared, and owned to be blessed, by all his creatures; hence the frequent form of blessing him used, *Blessed be the Lord God*, &c. Gen. ix. 26. Psal. lxxii. 18. Luke i. 68. Eph. i. 3. thus he is blessed by angels, who, as they are called upon to bless him, do ascribe honour, glory, and blessing to him, Psal. ciii. 20. Rev. v. 11, 12. and vii. 11, 12. and by the saints, who call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless his holy name for all benefits bestowed upon them, Psal. ciii. 1—3. and cxlv. 10. Which is done, not by invoking a blessing on him: for there is none greater than he, to invoke and ask one of, much less by conferring any upon him; for has he needs none, a creature can give him nothing but what is his own. Besides without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the greater; the creature of the Creator, and not the Creator of the creature: but this is done by congratulating his greatness and blessedness, and ascribing it to him, and praising him for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed on them by him; and which, as they come from him, are proofs of the blessedness that is in him. And here ends the account of the attributes of God; which all center and terminate in his blessedness.

OF THE UNITY OF GOD.

HAVING treated of the attributes of God, I shall now proceed to prove that this God, who is possessed of all these great and glorious perfections is but one. This is a first principle, and not to be doubted of; it is a most certain truth, most surely to be believed, and with the greatest confidence to be asserted; as he is a fool that says there is no God, he is equally so, who says there are more than one; and, indeed, as Tertullian[*] observes, if God is not one, he is not at all. This is the first and chief commandment which God has given, and requires an assent and obedience to; on which all religion, doctrine, and faith depend, Mark xii. 28—30. it is the voice both of reason and revelation; it is discernible by the light of nature; what teaches men there is a God, teaches them there is but one: and though when men neglected the true God, and his worship, and liked not to retain him in their knowledge, he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to judicial blindness, to believe the Father of lies, who led them on by degrees into the grossest idolatry; yet the wiser and better sort of them, though they complied with the custom of countries in which they lived, and paid a lesser sort of worship to the rabble of inferior deities, in which they are not at all to be excused from idolatry; yet they held and owned one supreme

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[*] Adv. Marcion, l. 1. c. 3.

Being, whom they often call the Father of the Gods and men[f]; the chief God with the Assyrians, as Macrobius relates[g], was called Adad; which, he says, signifies one; and with the Phœnicians, Adodus, the King of the Gods[h]; the same with אחד, one. That there is but one God, is an article in the Jewish Creed, and which still continues; and no wonder, since it stands in such a glaring light in the writings of the Old Testament, and is as clearly and as strongly asserted in the New; so that we christians know assuredly, *that there is none God but one*, 1 Cor. viii. 4. It is a truth agreed on by all, by Jews and Gentiles; by Jewish doctors[i], and heathen poets and philosophers[k]; by Old and New Testament-saints; by the holy angels; and even by the devils themselves: it must be right and well to believe it. The apostle James commends the faith of it; *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble*, chap. ii. 19. But I go on,

I. To give the proof of this doctrine; which may be taken partly from express passages of scripture, both in the Old and New Testament; see Deut. vi. 4. Psal. lxxxvi. 10. Isai. xliii. 10. and xliv. 6, 8. and xlv. 5—22. and xlvi. 9. Mark xii. 29. John xvii. 3. Rom. iii. 30. 1 Cor. viii. 4—6. Eph. iv. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5. The sense of these scriptures will be observed hereafter, and partly from the perfections of God, and his relations to his creatures.

The necessary existence of God is a proof of his unity. The existence of God must be either of necessity, or of will and choice; if of will and choice, then it must be either of the will and choice of another, or of his own; not of another, for then that other would be prior and superior to him, and so be God and not he: not of his own will and choice, for then he must be before himself, and be and not be at the same instant; which is such an absurdity and contradiction as is not to be endured. It remains, therefore, that he necessarily exists; and if so, there can be but one God; for no reason can be given why there should be, or can be, more than one necessarily existent Being.

God is the first Being, the cause of all other Beings; he is the first Cause, and last End of all things; the mind of man, from effects, rises to the knowledge of causes; and from one cause, to the cause of that; and so proceeds on until it arrives to the first Cause, which is without a cause, and is what is truly called God; and as therefore there is but one first Cause, there can be but one God; so, according to Pythagoras and Plato, unity is the principle of all things[l].

God, the first Cause, who is without a cause, and is the Cause of all, is independent; all owe their existence to him, and so depend upon him for the preservation, continuance, and comfort of their being; all live, and move, and have their being in him; but he, receiving his being from none, is independent of any; which can only be said of one; there is but one independent Being, and therefore but one God.

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[f] Homer. Illiad. 1. Hesiod. l. 1. Opera & Dies, v. 59.

[g] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 24.

[h] Sanchoniatho apud Euseb. præpar. Evangel. l. 1. p. 38.

[i] Maimon. Yesode Hattorah. c. 1. s. 4, Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 6, 7.

[k] Vide Mornæum de Ver. Christ. Relig. c. 3.

[l] Laert. l. 1. in Vita Pythagoræ.

God is an eternal Being, before all things, from everlasting to everlasting; and there can be but one Eternal, and so but one God; *before me*, says he, *there was no God formed; neither shall there be after me*, Isai. xliii. 10. if then no other, then but one God.

God is infinite and incomprehensible; as he is not bounded by time, so not by space: he is not contained or included any where, nor comprehended by any. To suppose two infinites, the one must either reach unto, comprehend, and include the other, or not; if it does not, then it is not infinite, and so not God; if it does reach unto, comprehend, and include the other, then that which is comprehended, and included by it is finite, and so not God; therefore it is clear there cannot be more infinites than one; and if but one infinite, then but one God.

Omnipotence is a perfection of God; he claims this title to himself, The Lord God almighty: now there cannot be more than one Almighty; omnipo-ence admits of no degrees; it cannot be said, there is one that is almighty, and nother that is more almighty, and a third that is most almighty; there is but ne Almighty, and so but one God, who can do all things whatsoever he plea-es; nothing is too hard, too difficult, or impossible to him; nor can any turn ack his hand, or stay and stop him from acting. To suppose two almighties, ither the one can lay a restraint upon the other, and hinder him from acting, r he cannot; if he cannot, then he is not almighty, the other is mightier than e; if he can, then he on whom the restraint is laid, and is hindred from acting, s not almighty, and so not God; and therefore there can be but one God.

God is good essentially, originally, and inderivatively; the source and foun-ain of all goodness; *There is none good but one*, says Christ, *that is, God*, Matt. ix. 17. and therefore but one God. The heathens call their supreme God *)ptimus*, the best; and there can be none better than the best. He is the *ummum bonum*, the chief good; and that is but one, and therefore but one God.

God is a perfect Being; *your heavenly Father*, says Christ, *is perfect*, Matt. . 48. he is perfect and entire, wanting nothing, compleatly perfect: now if ere are more gods than one, there must be some essential difference by which hey are distinguished from one another, and that must be either an excellency r an imperfection; if the latter, then he to whom it belongs is not God, be-ause not perfect; if the former, he in whom it is, is distinguished from all thers in whom it is not, and so is the one and only God.

The true God is El-Shaddai, God all-sufficient, stands in need of nothing; or of him, and by him, and for him, are all things. All-sufficiency can only e said of One, of Him who is the first Cause and last End of all things; and hich, as he is but one, so but one God.

Once more, There is but one Creator; whom all receive their beings from, re supported by, and accountable to, Mal. ii. 10. but one Lawgiver, who is ble to save and to destroy, James iv. 12. one King and Governor of the world; ne kingdom, which belongs to him; who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Were there more than one, the greatest confusion would be introduced in the world; if there were more than one that had the sovereign sway, different and contrary laws, edicts, and decrees, might be published, and subjects would not know whom they were to obey, and what their duty to be performed by them; or whose laws they should pay a regard unto. I proceed,

II. To explain the sense in which this article of one God is to be understood. And,

1. It is not to be understood in the Arian sense, that there is one supreme God, and two subordinate or inferior ones. This is no other than what is the notion, of the better and wiser sort of pagans, as before observed: and if revelation carries us no further than what the light of nature discovers, and that since the fall, and in its corrupt state, we gain nothing by it, with respect to the knowledge of God; nor are the expressions concerning the unity of the divine Being, which are in the scriptures levelled so much against the notion of more supreme gods, which is a notion that could never prevail much among the heathens; and is so absurd and contradictory, that there is no danger of mens giving into it; but against petty and inferior deities men might be tempted to embrace and worship. Besides, if two subordinate and inferior deities may be admitted, consistent with one God, why not two hundred, or two thousand! no reason can be given why the one should not stand as much excluded as the other: and again, those deities are either creators or creatures; if creators, then they are the one supreme God; for to create is peculiar to him; but if creatures, for there is no medium between the Creator and the creature, then they are not gods that made the heavens and the earth; and so come under the imprecation of the prophet, *The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth*, even *they shall perish*, or may they perish *from the earth*, *and from under these heavens*, Jer. x. 11. to which may be added, that such are not entitled to religious worship, which would be worshipping the creature besides and together with the Creator, and would be a breach of the first command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*, Rom. i. 25. Exod. xx. 1, 2.

2. Nor is this article to be understood in the Sabellian sense, that God is but one person; for though there is but one God, there are three persons in the godhead, which the Sabellians deny; who are so called from one Sabellius who lived in the middle of the third century; though this notion was broached before him by Noetus[m], whose followers were called Noetians and Patripassians, asserting, in consequence of their principles, that the Father became incarnate, suffered and died: and before them Victorinus and Praxeas[n] were much of the same opinion, against whom Tertullian wrote, and who speaks[o] of one sort of the *Cataphrygians* who held that Jesus Christ was both Son and Father; and even it may be traced up as high as Simon Magus, who asserted that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were only different names of one and the same person, according to his different way of operation[p]: and as before his pretended conversion

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[m] Vid. Augustin. de Hæres. c. 36. [n] Tertullian. de Præscript. Hæret. c. 53. & Adv. Praxeam, c. 1. 2. [o] De Præscript. c. 52. [p] Vid. Danæum in August. de Hæres. c. 1.

he gave out that he was some great one; Acts viii. 9. so he did afterwards, and said he was the Father in Samaria, the Son in Judea, and the Holy Ghost in the rest of the nations[q]. Our *Socinians* and modern *Unitarians* are much of the same sentiment with the *Sabellians* in this respect; and some who profess evangelical doctrines have embraced it, or are nibbling at it; fancying they have got new light, when they have only imbibed an old stale error, an ancient work of darkness, which has been confuted over and over. If the Father, Son, and Spirit were but one person, they could not be three testifiers, as they are said to be, 1 John v. 7. to testify is a personal action; and if the Father is one that bears record, the Son another, and the Holy Ghost a third, they must be three persons and not one only; and when Christ says, *I and my father are one*, John x. 30. he cannot mean one person, for this is to make him say what is the most absurd and contradictory; as that I and myself are one, or that I am one, and my father who is another, are one person; but of this more hereafter.

III. Nor is this doctrine to be understood in a *Tritheistic* sense, that is, that there are three essences or beings numerically distinct, which may be said to be one, because of the same nature; as three men may be said to be one, because of the same human nature; but this is to assert three Gods and not one; this the *Trinitarians* indeed are often charged with, and they as often deny the charge; for though they affirm the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, yet not that they are three Gods, but one God. For they assert, that there is but one divine essence, undivided, and common to Father, Son, and Spirit, and in this sense but one God; since there is but one essence, though there are different modes of subsisting in it which are called persons; and these possess the whole essence undivided; that is to say, not that the Father has one part, the Son another, and the holy Spirit a third; but as the whole fulness of the godhead dwells in the Father, so in the Son, who has all that the Father has, John xv. 16. Col. ii. 9. and so in the Spirit, and therefore but one God. This unity of them is not an unity of testimony only; for it is not said of them as of the three that bear record on earth, that they agree in one, but that they are one, 1 John v. 7, 8. but it is an unity of nature; they have one and the same infinite and undivided nature; and this unity is not an unity of parts, which makes one compositum, as the body and soul of man do; for God is a simple and uncompounded Spirit; nor an unity of genus and species, under which may be many singulars of the same kind, but God is one in number and nature, and stands opposed to the polytheism of the heathens, who had gods many and lords many, 1 Cor. viii. 4, 5. and to all nominal and figurative deities, as angels, civil magistrates, judges, &c. even to all who are not by nature God, Gal. iv. 8. Nor is this unity of God to be objected to and set aside by the many names of God, as El, Elohim, Jehovah, &c. since these are names of the one God, as one and the same man may have different names, and yet but one; nor by the many attributes of God, which do not differ from him, nor from one another, but are all one in God, and are himself; though distinctly considered by us, because our understandings are too weak to take them in as in the gross, but to consider them apart, as has been observed. Nor by the persons in the godhead being more than one; for though three persons, they differ not from the divine essence, nor from one another, but by their distinctive modes of subsisting, and are but one God. Nor are those passages of scripture which assert the unity of God to be appropriated to one person only, to the exclusion of the others; but to be considered as including each.

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[q] Irenæus Adv. Hæret. c. 23.

The famous passage in Deut. vi. 4. which is introduced in a solemn manner exciting attention, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!* and which Christ, refers the scribe to as the first and chief command, Mark xii. 28, 29. asserts that there is but one Jehovah; but not that this is peculiar to the Father, and as exclusive of the Son and Spirit; for Christ the Son of God is Jehovah, and is often so called; see Exod. xvii. 7. Num. xxi. 6. compared with 1 Cor. x. 9. Jer. xxiii. 6. Zech. xii. 10. and so the Holy Ghost, Isai. vi. 1—9. compared with Acts xxviii. 25, 26. and these, with the Father, are the one Lord or Jehovah; and are manifestly included in Elohenu, a word of the plural number, and may be rendered our Gods, or rather our divine persons are one Lord; for Christ the Son is one of them, who is that God whose throne is for ever and ever; and the Spirit that God, or divine person, who anointed Christ as man, Psal. xlv. 6, 7. and that the three divine persons who are the one Jehovah are here meant, is not only the sense of christian[r] writers but even of the ancient Jews[s]; and besides, the Son and Spirit are entitled to the same sincere and fervent love of men as the Father, and which is required to be given to the one Jehovah, even Father, Son and Spirit.

The several passages in Isaiah before referred to, and which so strongly assert the unity of the Divine Being, cannot be understood to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit. In one of them, chap. xliv. 6. the only Lord God calls himself the first and the last, a title which also Christ the Son of God claims as his, Rev. i. 8. yea in the same passage the one God stiles himself the Redeemer, a name very peculiar to the Son, who agreed to be the Redeemer; came in the fulness of time as such, and has obtained eternal redemption for men; and in another of those passages, chap. xlv. 21. the only Lord God is spoken of as a Saviour; and in 22. Christ is represented as a Saviour inviting and encouraging persons to look to him for salvation, enforcing it with this reason, *for I am God, and there is none else:* now as the Father cannot be supposed to be excluded hereby, so neither should the Son and Spirit be thought to be excluded by similar expressions elsewhere; besides, the following verse, 23. is manifestly applied to Christ by the Apostle, Rom. xiv. 10, 11.

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, John xvii. 3. which affirm the Father to be the only true God, cannot be understood to the exclusion of himself; *this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom*

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[r] Vid. Fulgentii. Respons. contr. Arian. Obj. 4. 10.

[s] See my Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 19, 20.

thou hast sent: since Christ also is called the only Lord God, Jude 4. and the true God and eternal life, 1 John v. 20. nor would he have joined himself so closely with the only true God, if he was not so; but he thought it no robbery to be equal with him, yea one with him; of the same nature, power, and glory; and besides, eternal life is made as much to depend on the knowledge of Christ as of his Father; see John vi. 47—54. the reason of this mode of expression, distinguishing the one from the other, is because Christ is described by his office as sent of God.

In Rom. iii. 30. it is said, *It is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith*; that is, there is one God of Jews and Gentiles, which this is said to prove, 29. but Christ cannot stand excluded from the one God that justifies, since he is Jehovah our righteousness, and the sun of righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. Mal. iv. 2. and it is not only his righteousness by which men are justified, Jews and Gentiles; but he himself justifies them by his knowledge, that is, by faith, Isai. liii. 11. nor the holy Spirit, who brings near Christ's righteousness, and applies it; works faith to receive it, and pronounces men justified by it, 1 Cor. vi. 11.

The text in 1 Cor. viii. 6. which expresses the faith of christians, there is *but one God the Father, of whom are all things,* stands opposed not to any other persons in the Godhead, but to the many lords and gods among the heathens, 5. nor is the Father called the Father of Christ, or opposed to him, but the Father of all; that is, the Creator; see Mal. ii. 10. in which character, the Son and Spirit are included, Eccles. xii. 1. Besides, if Christ could be thought to stand excluded from the one God, the Father, by the same rule of interpretation, God the Father must stand excluded from the one Lord, said of Christ in the same text; and these observations may be applied to Eph. iv. 5, 6. and will serve to clear and explain the words there to the same sense.

It is also said in 1 Tim. ii, 5. that *there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:* now the reason why Christ is spoken of as distinct from the one God, though not different, is for the sake of the mention of him in his office as Mediator; but then if he was not the one God, with the other divine person; or the true God, and the great God, he could not be a Mediator between God and man: he could not be a day's-man between them, and lay his hands on both; he could not draw nigh to God, and treat with him about peace and reconciliation; and much less make peace for men, and be a ransom for them; as in the following verse: but after all, though there are three persons in the Godhead, as will more clearly appear hereafter, and none of them stand excluded from Deity, yet there is but one God; this is an article that must be inviolably maintained.

The doctrine of the unity of the divine Being, is of great importance in religion; especially in the affair of worship. God, the one only God, is the object of it. This is the sense of the first and second Commands, which forbid owning any other God but one, and the worship of any creature whatever.

angels or men, or any other creature, and the likeness of them; which to do is to worship the creature, besides, or along with the Creator. But this hinders not but that the Son and Spirit may have acts of worship performed to them, equally as to the Father; and for this reason, because they are, with him, the one God; hence baptism is administered equally in the name of all three; and prayer is jointly made unto them; both solemn acts of religious worship; see Matt. xxviii. 19. Rev. i. 4, 5. And this doctrine of the unity of the divine Being, as it fixes and settles the object of worship, so being closely attended to, it guides the mind right in the consideration of it, while worshipping, without any confusion and division in it; for let the direction, or address, be to which person it may, as each may be distinctly addressed; be it to the Father, he is considered in the act of worship, as the one God, with the Son and Spirit; if the address is to the Son, he is considered as the one God, with the Father and the Spirit; or if the address is to the Spirit, he is considered as the one God, with the Father and Son. And this doctrine also serves to fix and settle the object of our faith, hope, and love, without division and distraction of mind; which are not to be exercised on different objects, and to be divided between them; but are to center in one object, the one only true God, Father, Son, and Spirit; whom alone we are to make our confidence, our hope, and the center of our affections, Jer. xvii. 7. Psal. lxxiii. 25. As well as this doctrine carries a strong and powerful argument to promote unity, harmony and concord among the saints; for which it is used in Eph. iv. 3—6.

OF A PLURALITY IN THE GODHEAD.

HAVING proved the unity of the divine Being, and explained the sense in which it is to be understood; my next work will be to prove that there is a plurality in the Godhead; or, that there are more persons than one, and that these are neither more, nor fewer, than three; or, that there is a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine essence. Some except to these terms, because not literally and syllabically expressed in scripture; as Essence, Unity, Trinity, and Person; of which see the introduction, p. 10. I shall;

I. Prove that there is a plurality of persons in the one God; or, that there are more than one. The Hebrew word פנים which answers to the Greek word *πρόσωπα*, is used of the divine persons, פני *My persons shall go with thee*, Exod. xxxiii. 14. and if פניך *thy persons go not with me*, 15. and *he brought thee out* בפניו *by his persons*, Deut. iv. 37. The word is used three times in Psal. xxvii. 8, 9. and in each clause the *Septuagint* has the word *πρόσωπον*, and which, as *Suidas*[1] observes, is expressive of the sacred Trinity. That there is such a plurality of persons; will appear more clearly,

1. From the plural names and epithets of God. His great and incommunicable name Jehovah, is always in the singular number; and is never used plu-

[1] In voce πρόσωπον.

rally; the reason of which is, because it is expressive of his essence, which is but one; it is the same with *I AM that I AM*; but the first name of God we meet with in scripture, and that in the first verse of it, is plural; *In the beginning God* (Elohim) *created the heaven and the earth*, Gen. i. 1. and therefore must design more than one, at least two, and yet not precisely two, or two only; then it would have been dual; but it is plural: and, as the Jews themselves say, cannot design fewer than three[v]. Now Moses might have made use of other names of God, in his account of the creation; as his name Jehovah, by which he made himself known to him, and to the people of Israel; or Eloah, the singular of Elohim, which is used by him, Deut. xxxii. 15, 16. and in the book Job frequently; so that it was not want of singular names of God, nor the barrenness of the Hebrew language, which obliged him to use a plural word; it was no doubt of choice, and with design; and which will be more evident when it is observed, that one end of the writings of Moses, is to extirpate the polytheism of the heathens, and to prevent the people of Israel from going into it; and therefore it may seem strange, that he should begin his history with a plural name of God; he must have some design in it, which could not be to inculcate a plurality of gods, for that would be directly contrary to what he had in view in writing, and to what he asserts, Deut. vi. 4. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord:* nor a plurality of mere names and characters, to which creative powers cannot be ascribed; but a plurality of persons, for so the words may be rendered, distributively, according to the Idiom of the Hebrew language; "In the beginning every one, or each of the divine persons, created the heaven and the earth." And then the historian goes on to make mention of them; who, besides the Father, included in this name, are the Spirit of God, that moved upon the Face of the waters, and the Word of God, verse 2. which said, *Let there be light, and there was light*; and which spoke that, and all things, out of nothing; see John i. 1—3. And it may be further observed, that this plural word Elohim, is, in this passage, in construction with a verb singular Bara, rendered created; which some have thought is designed to point out, a plurality of persons, in the unity of the divine essence; but if this is not judged sufficient to build it upon, let it be further observed, that the word Elohim is sometimes in construction with a verb plural, as in Gen. xx. 13. and xxxv. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 23. where Elohim, the gods, or divine persons, are said to cause Abraham to wander from his father's house; to appear to Jacob; and to go forth to redeem Israel: all which are personal actions: and likewise it is in construction with adjectives and participles plural, Deut. iv. 7. and v. 26. Josh. xxiv. 19. 1 Sam. vii. 26, 36. Psal. lviii. 11. Prov. xxx. 3. Jer. x. 10. in which places Elohim, gods, or the divine persons, are said to be nigh to the people of Israel; to be living, holy, and to judge the earth; characters which belong to persons; and now, as a learned man[w] well observes, "that however the construction of a noun plural with a verb singular, may render it doubtful to some whether these words express a plurality or no, yet certainly there can be no doubt in those places, where a verb or adjective plural are joined with the word Elohim." No such stress is laid on this word, as if it was the clearest and strongest proof of a plurality in the Deity; it is only mentioned, and mentioned first, because it is the most usual name of God, being used of him many hundreds of times in scripture; and what stress is laid upon it, is not merely because it is plural, but because it appears often in an unusual form of construction; it is used of others, but not in such a form; as has been observed. It is used of angels, Psal. viii. 6. they being not only many, but are often messengers of God, of the divine Persons in the Godhead, represent them, and speak in their name. And it is used of civil magistrates, Psal. lxxxii. 6. and so of Moses, as a god to Pharaoh, Exod. vii. 1. as they well may be called, since they are the vicegerents and representatives of the Elohim, the divine Persons, the Trine-une God: nor need it be wondered at, that it should be sometimes used of a single Person in the Deity, it being common to them all; and since each of them possess the whole divine nature and essence undivided, Psal. xlv. 6, 7. The ancient Jews not only concluded a purality, but even a Trinity, from the word *Elohim*[x]. With respect to the passage in Numb. xv. 16. they say[y], "There is no judgment less than three;" and that three persons sitting in judgment, the divine Majesty is with them, they conclude from Psal. lxxxii. 1. *he judgeth among the gods*, באלהים. Hence they further observe[z], that "no sanhedrim, or court of judicature, is called אלהים unless it consists of three." From whence it is manifest, that the ancient Jews believed that this name not only inferred a plurality of persons, but such a plurality which consisted of three at least.

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[v] Vid. Alting. Dissert. Philolog. 4. s. 6, 7, 8. [w] Allix's Judgment of the Jewish Church, p. 124.

Another plural name of God is *Adonim*; *If I am* (Adonim) *Lords, where is my fear?* Mal. i. 6. now, though this may be said of one in the second and third Persons plural, yet never of one in the first Person, as it is here said of God by himself; *I am Lords*; and we are sure there are two, *The Lord said to my Lord*, &c. Psal. cx. 1.

In Dan. iv. 17. the most high God is called the watchers and the holy ones; *This matter is by the decree of the watches, and the demand by the word of the holy Ones*; which respects the revolution and destruction of the Babylonian monarchy; an affair of such moment and importance as not to be ascribed to angels, which some understand by watchers and holy ones; but however applicable these epithets may be to them, and they may be allowed to be the executioners of the decrees of God, yet not the makers of them; nor can any thing in this world, and much less an affair of such consequence as this, be said to be done in virtue of any decree of theirs; besides, this decree is expressly called, the decree of the most High, 24. so that the watchers and holy Ones, are no other than the divine Persons in the Godhead; who are holy in their nature, and watch over the saints to do them good; and over the wicked, to bring evil upon them: and as they are so called in the plural number, to express the plurality of them in the Deity; so to preserve the unity of the divine essence, this same decree is called, the decree of the most High, 24. and they the watcher and holy One, in the singular number in 13.

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[x] See my doctrine of the Trinity, p. 30. [y] Gloss. in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 46. 2. [z] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 6 1. & Gloss. in ibid.

II. A plurality in the Deity, may be proved from plural expressions used by God when speaking of himself, respecting the works of creation, providence, and grace. At the creation of man he said, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*, Gen. i. 25. the pronouns *us* and *our*, manifestly express a plurality of persons; these being personal plural characters; as image and likeness being in the singular number, secure the unity of the divine essence; and that there were more than one concerned in the creation of man, is clear from the plural expressions used of the divine Being, when he is spoken of as the Creator of men, Job xxxv. 10. Psal. cxlix. 2. Eccles. xii. 1. Isai. liv. 5. in all which places, in the original text, it is, my Makers, his Makers, thy Creators, thy Makers; for which no other reason can be given, than that more persons than one had an hand herein; for as for the angels, they are creatures themselves, and not possessed of creative powers; nor were they concerned in the creation of man, nor was he made after their image and likeness; nor can it be reasonably thought that God spoke to them, and held a consultation with them about it; for *with whom took he counsel?* Isai. xl. 14. Not with any of his creatures; no, not with the highest angel in heaven; they are not of his privy council. Nor is it to be thought that God, in the above passage, speaks *regio more*, after the manner of kings; who, in their edicts and proclamations, use the plural number, to express their honour and majesty; and even they are not to be considered alone, but as connotating their ministers and privy council, by whose advice they act; and, besides, this courtly way of speaking, was not so ancient as the times of Moses; none of the kings of Israel use it; nor even any of those proud and haughty monarchs, Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar; the first appearance of it is in the letters of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, Ezra iv. 18. and vii. 23. which might take its rise from the conjunction of Darius and Cyrus, in the Persian empire, in both whose names edicts might be made, and letters wrote; which might give rise to such a way of speaking, and be continued by their successors, to express their power and glory: but, as a learned man[a] observes, "It is a very extravagant fancy, to suppose that Moses alludes to a custom that was not (for what appears) in being at that time, nor a great while after." The Jews themselves are sensible that this passage furnishes with an argument for a plurality in the Deity[b].

A like way of speaking is used concerning men, in Gen. iii. 22. *And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us*; not as one of the angels, for they are not of the Deity, nor the companions of God, and equal to him;

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[a] Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part 3. p. 90. edit. fol.

[b] See my doctrine of the Trinity, p. 35, 36.

for whatever private secret meaning Satan might have in saying, Ye shall be as gods; he would have it understood by Eve, and so she understood it, that they should be not like the angels merely, but like God himself; this was the bait he laid, and which took, and proved man's ruin; upon which the Lord God said these words, either sarcastically, "behold the man whom Satan promised, and he expected to be as one of us, as one of the persons in the Deity; see how much he looks like one of us! who but just now ran away from us in fear and trembling, and covered himself with fig-leaves, and now stands before us cloathed with skins of slain beasts!" or else as comparing his former and present state together; for the words may be rendered, he was as one of us; made after their image and likeness: but what is he now? he has sinned, and come short of that glorious image; has lost his honour, and is become like the beasts that perish, whose skins he now wears. Philo[c], the Jew, owns that these words are to be understood not of one, but of more; the *εν καὶ πολλα*, the one and many, so much spoken of by the Pythagoreans and Platonists; and which Plato[d] speaks of as infinite and eternal, and of the knowledge of them as the gift of the gods; and which, he says, was delivered to us by the ancients; who were better than we, and lived nearer the gods; by whom he seems to intend the ancient Jews; this, I say, though understood by their followers of the unity of God, and the many ideas in him, the same with what we call decrees; I take to be no other than the one God, and a plurality of persons in the Deity; which was the faith of the ancient Jews; so that the *πολλα*, of Plato, and others, is the same with the *πληθος* of Philo, who was a great Platonizer; and both intend a plurality of persons.

God sometimes uses the plural number when speaking of himself, with respect to some particular affairs of providence, as the confusion of languages; *Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language*; which also cannot be said to angels; had it, it would rather have been, go *ye*, and do *ye* confound their language: but, alas, this work was above the power of angels to do; none but God, that gave to man the faculty of speech, and the use of language, could confound it; which was as great an instance of divine power, as to bestow the gift of tongues on the apostles, at Pentecost; and the same God that did the one, did the other; and so the *us* here, are after explained of Jehovah, in the following verse, to whom the confounding the language of men, and scattering them abroad on the face of the earth, are ascribed, verse 8, 9. In another affair of providence, smiting the Jewish nation with judicial blindness; this plural way of speaking is used by the divine Being; says the prophet Isaiah, *I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* Isai. vi. 8. not the seraphim say this, but Jehovah; for to them neither the name Jehovah, nor the work agree; and though there is but one Jehovah that here speaks, yet more persons than one are intended by him; of Christ, the Son of God no question can be made, since the Evangelist applies them to him; and observes, that

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[c] το ποιησωμεν πληθος εμφαινοντος, De Confus. Ling. 844, 845.

[d] In Philebo, p. 372, 373. Ed. Ficin. Vid. Parmenidem, p. 1111, 1112, 1117, 1120, 1122.

Isaiah said the words when he saw his glory, and spoke of him, John xii. 40, 41. nor of the Holy Ghost, to whom they are also applied, Acts xxviii. 25, 26. There is another passage in Isai. xli. 21—23. where Jehovah, the King of Jacob, challenges the heathens, and their gods, to bring proof of their Deity, by prediction of future events; and, in which, he all along uses the plural number; "shew us what shall happen, that we may consider them; declare unto us things for to come, that we may know that ye are gods, and that we may be dismayed; see also Isai. xliii. 9.

And as in the affairs of creation and providence, so in those of grace, and with respect to spiritual communion with God, plural expressions are used; as when our Lord says, *If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,* John xiv. 23. which personal actions of coming and making abode, expressive of communion and fellowship, are said of more than one; and we cannot be at a loss about two of them, Christ and his Father, who are expressly mentioned; and hence we read of fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ; and also of the communion of the Holy Ghost, 1 John i. 3. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. To all these instances of plural expressions, may be added Cant. i. 11, John iii. 11.

III. A plurality in the Deity may be proved from those passages of scripture which speak of the angel of Jehovah, who also is Jehovah; now if there is a Jehovah that is sent, and therefore called an angel, and a Jehovah that sends, there must be more persons than one, who are Jehovah.

The first instance of this kind is in Gen. xvi. 7. where the angel of Jehovah is said to find Hagar, Sarah's maid, in the wilderness, and bid her return to her mistress; which angel appears to be Jehovah, since he promises to do that for her, and acquaints her with future things, which no created angel, and none but Jehovah could, 10—12. and what proves it beyond all dispute that he must be Jehovah, is, what is said, 13. *She called the name of the Lord,* or Jehovah, *that spake unto her, thou, God, seest.*

In Gen. xviii. 2. we read of three men who stood by Abraham in the plains of *Mamre,* who were angels in an human form, as two of them are expressly said to be, chap. xix. 1. Dr. Lightfoot[e] is of opinion, that they were the three divine persons; and scruples not to say, that at such a time the Trinity dined with Abraham; but the Father, and the holy Spirit, never assumed an human form; nor are they ever called angels. However, one of these was undoubtedly a divine person, the Son of God in an human form; who is expressly called Jehovah, the Judge of all the earth, 13—26. and to whom omnipotence and omniscience are ascribed, 14—19. and to whom Abraham shewed the utmost reverence and respect, 27—31. and now he is distinguished, being Jehovah in human form on earth, from Jehovah in heaven, from whom he is said to rain brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, chap. xix. 24. which conflagration was not made by the ministry of created angels, but is always represented as the work of Elohim, of the divine Persons, Jer. l. 40. Amos iv. 11.

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[e] Works, vol. 1. p. 13.

An angel also appeared to Abraham at the offering up of his son Isaac, and bid him desist from it; and who appears plainly to be the same with him who ordered him to do it; expressly called God, Gen. xxii. 11, 12. compared with ~~1, 2. and~~ Jehovah, who swore by himself, and promised to do what none but God could do, 16—18. see Heb. vi. 13, 14. where what is here said is expressly ascribed to God, Add to this, the name Abraham gave the place on this occasion, Jehovah-Jireh, because the Lord had appeared, and would hereafter appear in this place.

The angel invoked by Jacob, Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. is put upon a level with the God of his Fathers Abraham and Isaac; yea, is represented as the same; and the work of redeeming him from all evil, equal to that of feeding him all his life long, is ascribed to him; as well as a blessing on the sons of Joseph, is prayed for from him; all which would never have been said of, nor done to a created angel.

The angel which appeared to Moses in the bush, Exod. iii. 2. was not a created angel, but a divine person; as is evident from the names by which he is called, Jehovah, God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I AM that I AM, 4—14. and from the things ascribed to him; seeing the afflictions of the Israelites, coming to deliver them out of Egyptian bondage, and promising to bring them into the land of Canaan, 7, 8. to which may be added, the prayer of Moses for a blessing on Joseph, because of the good will of him that dwelt in the bush, Deut. xvxiii. 16. and the application of this passage to God, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Mark xii. 26.

Once more, the angel that was promised to go before the children of Israel, to keep and guide them in the way through the wilderness to the land of Canaan, is no other than Jehovah; since not only the obedience of the children of Israel to him is required: but it is suggested, that should they disobey him, he would not, though he could, pardon their iniquities; which none but God can do: and also it is said, the name of the Lord was in him; that is, his nature and perfections; and since it is the same the children of Israel rebelled against, he could be no other than Christ, the Son of God, whom they tempted; the angel of God's presence; who, notwithstanding, saved and carried them all the days of old, Isai. lxiii. 9. 1 Cor. x. 9.

Again, we read of the angel of the Lord, before whom Joshua the high-priest, was brought and stood, being accused by Satan, Zech. iii. 1. who is not only called Jehovah, 2. but takes upon him to do and order such things, which none but God could do; as causing the iniquity of Joshua to pass from him, and clothing him with change of raiment; see Isai. lxi. 10.

To these may be added, all such scriptures which speak of two, as distinct from each other, under the same name of Jehovah; as in the abovementioned text, Gen. xix. 24. where Jehovah is said to rain fire and brimstone from Jehovah, out of heaven; and in Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. where Jehovah promises to raise up a righteous branch to David, whose name should be called Jehovah our righteousness: and in Hos. i. 7. where Jehovah resolves he would save his people by Jehovah their God. Other passages might be mentioned, as proving a plurality in Deity; but as some of these will also prove a Trinity in it, they will be considered under the following head; where it will be proved,

II. That this plurality in the Godhead, is neither more nor fewer than three; or, that there is a Trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence; this I have before taken for granted, and now I shall prove it. And not to take notice of the name Jehovah being used three times, and three times only, in the blessing of the priest, Numb. vi. 24—26. and in the prayer of Daniel, chap. ix. 19. and in the church's declaration of her faith in God, Isai. xxxiii. 22. and the word holy repeated three times, and three times only, in the seraphims celebration of the glory of the divine Being, Isai. vi. 3. and in that of the living creatures, in Rev. iv. 8. which may seem to be accidental, or the effect of a fervent and devout disposition of mind; but there is not any thing, no not the least thing that is said or written in the sacred scriptures, without design.

I shall begin with the famous text in 1 John v. 7. as giving full proof and evidence of this doctrine; *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one:* which is not only a proof of the Deity of each of these three, inasmuch as they are not only said to be one, that is, one God; and their witness is called the witness of God, 9. but of a Trinity of Persons, in the unity of the divine essence; unity of essence, or nature, is asserted and secured, by their being said to be one; which respects not a mere unity of testimony, but of nature; for it is not said of them, as of the witnesses on earth, that they agree in one; but that they are one. And they may be called a Trinity, inasmuch as they are three; and a Trinity of Persons, since they are not only spoken of as distinct from each other, the Father from the Word and Holy Ghost, the Word from the Father and the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Word; but a personal action is ascribed to each of them; for they are all three said to be testifiers, or to bear record; which cannot be said of mere names and characters; nor be understood of one person under different names; for if the one living and true God only bears record, first under the character of a Father, then under the character of a Son, or the Word, and then under the character of the Holy Ghost; testimony, indeed, would be bore three times, but there would be but one testifier and not three, as the apostle asserts. Suppose one man should, for one man may bear the characters, and stand in the relations of father, son, and master; of a father to a child of his own; of a son, his father being living; and of a master to servants under him; suppose, I say, this man should come into a court of judicature, and be admitted to bear testimony in an affair there depending, and should give his testimony first under the character of a father, then under the character of a son, and next under the character of a master; every one will conclude, that though here was a testimony three times bore, yet there was but one, and not three, that bore record. This text is so glaring a proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, that the enemies of it have done all they can to weaken its authority, and have pushed hard to extirpate it from a place in the sacred writings. They object, that it is wanting in the Syriac version; that the old Latin interpreter has it not; that it is not to be found in many Greek Manuscripts; and is not quoted by the ancient fathers who wrote against the Arians, when it might have been of great service to them. To all which it may be replied; that as to the Syriac version, though an ancient one, it is but a version, and till of late, appeared a very defective one; the history of the adulterous woman in the eight of John the second epistle of Peter, the second and third epistles of John, the epistle of Jude, and the book of Revelation, were all wanting, till restored from a copy of archbishop Usher's, by *De Dieu*, and Dr. Pocock; and who also, from an eastern copy, has supplied the version with this text, so that now it stands in it. And as to the old Latin interpreter, it is certain that it is to be seen in many Latin manuscripts of an early date, and is in the vulgate Latin version, of the London Polyglot Bible; and the Latin translation which bears the name of Jerom, has it; and who, in an epistle to Eustochium, prefixed to his translation of those canonical epistles, complains of the omission of it, by unfaithful interpreters. As to its being wanting in some Greek manuscripts, it need only be said, it is found in many others; it is in the Complutensian edition, the compilers of which made use of various copies, out of sixteen ancient copies of Robert Stephens's, nine of them had it; and it is also said to be in an old British copy. As to its not being quoted by some of the ancient fathers, this can be no proof of its not being genuine; since it might be in the original copy, and not in that used by them, through the carelessness and unfaithfulness of transcribers; or through copies erased falling into their hands, such as had been corrupted before the times of Arius, even by Artemon, or his disciples, who lived in the second century; who held that Christ was a mere man; by whom, it is said[f], this passage was erased; and certain it is, that this epistle was very early corrupted; as the ancient writers testify[g]: or it might be in the copies used by the fathers, and yet not quoted by them, having scriptures enough without it, to prove and defend the doctrine of it; and yet, after all, it appears plainly to be quoted by many of them; by Fulgentius[h], in the beginning of the sixth century, against the Arians, without any scruple or hesitation: and Jerom, as before observed, has it in his translation, made in the latter end of the fourth century: and it is quoted by Athanasius[i], about the middle of it: and before him by Cyprian[k], in the middle of the third century: and is manifestly referred to by Tertullian[l], in the beginning of it; and by Clemens of Alexandria[m], towards the end of the second century: so that it is to be traced up within a hundred years, or less, to the writing of the epistle; which is enough to satisfy any one of the genuineness of this text. And besides, it should be observed, that there never was any dispute about it, until Erasmus left it out in the first edition of his translation of the New Testament; and yet he himself, upon the credit of the old British copy, before mentioned, put it into another edition of his translation. Yea, the Socinians themselves have not dared to leave it out in their German Racovian version, A. C. 1630. To which may be added, that the context requires it; the connection with the preceding verse shows it, as well as its opposition to, and distinction from the following verse; and in verse 9. is a plain reference to the divine witnesses in this; for the inference in it would not be clear, if there was no mention before made of a divine testimony. But I shall not rest the proof of the doctrine of the Trinity on this single passage; but on the whole current and universal consent of scripture, where it is written as with a sun-beam; according to which, a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, appears in the works of creation, providence, and grace; in all things respecting the office and work of Christ; in God's acts of grace towards and upon his people; and in their worship and duties of religion enjoined them, and practised by them.

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[f] Vid. Wittichii Theolog. Pacific. c. 17. s. 254.

[g] Vid. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. l. 7. c. 32.

[h] Respons. contr. Arian. Obj. 10. & de Trinitate. c. 4.

[i] Contr. Arium, p. 109. de Unit. Deitat. Trin. ad Theophilum, l. 1. p. 399.

[k] De Unitat. Eccles. p. 255. & in Ep. 73. ad Jubajan p. 184.

[l] Adv. Praxeam, c. 25.

[m] Pædagog. l. 3. in fine.

1. In the works of creation: as by these the eternal power and godhead are made manifest, so in them are plain traces of a Trinity of persons; that God the Father made the heavens, earth and sea, and all that are in them, under which character the apostles addressed him as distinct from Christ his Son, Acts iv. 24, 27. none will doubt; and that the divine Word, or Son of God, was concerned in all this, a question cannot be made of it, when it is observed that it is said, *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that is made*, John 1. 2. And as for the Holy Spirit, he is not only said to move upon the face of the waters which covered the earth, and brought that unformed chaos of earth and water into a beautiful order, but to garnish the heavens, to bespangle the firmament with stars of light, and to form the crooked serpent, the Leviathan, which being the greatest is put for all the fishes of the sea; as well as he is said to be sent forth yearly, and renews the face of the earth at every returning spring; which is little less than a creation, and is so called, Gen. i. 2. Job xxvi. 13. Psal. civ. 30. and all three may be seen together in one text, Psal. xxxiii. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*; where mention is made of Jehovah, and his Word, the eternal Logos, and of his Spirit, the breath of his mouth, as all concerned in the making of the heavens, and all the host of them. And as in the creation of man, in particular, a plurality has been observed, this plurality was neither more nor fewer than three; that God the Father is the maker of men, will not be objected to; *Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?* Mal. ii. 10. and the Son of God, who is the husband of the church, and the Redeemer of men, is expressly said to be their maker, Isa. liv. 5. and of the Holy Spirit, Elihu in so many words says, *The*

Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the almighty hath given me life, Job xxxiii. 4.

II. A Trinity of persons appears in the works of providence. My father, says Christ, *worketh hitherto, and I work,* John v. 17. that is, ever since the works of creation were finished, in which both had an hand, they have been jointly concerned in the works of providence, in the government of the world, and in ordering and disposing of all things in it; and not to the exclusion of the holy Spirit, for, *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord,* or *being his counsellor hath taught him?* that is, in the affair of the government of the world, as follows; *With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?* to manage the important concerns of the world, to do every thing wisely and justly, and to overrule all for the best ends and purposes; see Isai. xl. 13, 14. And particularly the three divine persons appear in that remarkable affair of providence, the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, and the protection and guidance of them through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. Whoever reads attentively Isai. lxiii. 7—14. will easily observe, that mention is made of Jehovah, and of his mercy, loving-kindness, and goodness to the children of Israel; and then of the Angel of his presence, as distinct from him shewing love and pity to them, in saving, redeeming, bearing and carrying them all the days of old; and next of his holy Spirit, whom they rebelled against, and whom they vexed, and yet, though thus provoked, he led them on through the wilderness, and caused them to rest in the land of Cannaan.

III. The three divine persons are to be discerned most clearly in all the works of grace. The inspiration of the scriptures is a wonderful instance of the grace and goodness of God to men, which is the foundation and source of spiritual knowledge, peace and comfort; it is a divine work: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God,* 2 Tim. iii. 16. of God, Father, Son and Spirit; and though it is particularly ascribed to the holy Spirit, *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,* 2 Pet. i. 21. yet no one surely will say, to the exclusion of the Father; nor is there any reason to shut out the Son from a concern herein; and we find all three dictating the writings David was the penman of: *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue; the God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. where, besides the Spirit of the Lord, who spake by every inspired writer, there is the Father, the God of Israel, as he is commonly stiled, and the Son, the Rock of Israel, the Messiah, often figuratively called the Rock; and in the same manner, and by the same persons David was inspired, all the other penman of the scriptures were. Those writings acquaint us with the covenant of grace, no other writings do, made from everlasting before the world was; this covenant was made by Jehovah the Father, and was made with his Son, who condescended and agreed to be the surety, mediator, and messenger of it; yea he is said to be the covenant itself; and in which the holy Spirit is promised, and whose part in it is, and to which he agreed, to be the applier of the blessings and promises of it to those interested therein; see Psal. lxxxix. 3. Isai. xlii. 6. Mal. iii. 1. Heb. vii. 22. and xii. 24. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. John xvi. 14, 15. and they are all three mentioned together as concerned in this covenant, in Hag. ii. 4, 5. where, for the encouragement of the people of Israel to work in rebuilding the temple, it is said, For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you; or rather, as Junius renders it, with the Word by whom I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt, (at which time the covenant of grace was more clearly and largely revealed;) so my Spirit remaineth among you: where may be observed, Jehovah the covenant-maker, and his Word, in, by and with whom he covenanted; and the Spirit standing, as it may be rendered, remaining and abiding, to see there was a performance and an application of all that was promised. In the sacred writings, the oeconomy of man's salvation is clearly exhibited to us, in which we find the three divine persons, by agreement and consent, take their distinct parts; and it may be observed, that the election of men to salvation is usually ascribed to the Father; redemption, or the impetration of salvation, to the Son; and sanctification, or the application of salvation, to the Spirit; and they are all to be met with in one passage, 1 Pet. i, 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.* The same may be observed in 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. where God the Father is said to choose men from the beginning unto salvation; and the sanctification of the Spirit, is the means through which they are chosen; and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the end to which they are chosen and called: but no where are these acts of grace more distinctly ascribed to each person than in the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, where God the Father of Christ, is said to bless and choose his people in him before the foundation of the world, and to predestinate them to the adoption of children by him, in whom they are accepted with him, 3—6. and where Christ is spoken of as the author of redemption through his blood, which includes forgiveness of sin, and a justifying righteousness; which entitles to the heavenly inheritance, 7, 11. and then the holy Spirit, in distinction from them both, is said to be the earnest of their inheritance, and by whom they are sealed until they come to the full possession of it, 13, 14. The doctrine of the Trinity is often represented as a speculative point, of no great moment whether it is believed or no, too mysterious and curious to be pryed into, and that it had better be let alone than meddled with; but, alas, it enters into the whole of our salvation, and all the parts of it; into all the doctrines of the gospel, and into the experience of the saints; there is no doing without it; as soon as ever a man is convinced of his sinful and miserable estate by nature, he perceives there is a divine person that he has offended, and that there is need of another divine person to make satisfaction for his offences, and a third to sanctify him; to begin and carry on a work of grace in him, and to make him mee for eternal glory and happiness.

IV. A Trinity of persons in the Godhead may be plainly discovered in all things relating to the office and work of Christ, as the Redeemer and Saviour. In the mission of him into this world on that account: he, the Son of God, was sent by agreement, with his own consent, by the Father and the Spirit; this is affirmed by himself, Isai. xlviii. 16. *Now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me*; even he who says, 12, 13. *I am the first and the last*, and whose hand laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand spanned the heaven, and who is continued speaking to the 16. and must be a divine person; the mighty God who is said to be sent by Jehovah the Lord God, and by his Spirit; who therefore must be three distinct persons, and not one only; or otherwise the sense must be, " now I and myself have sent myself," which is none at all. Christ the Son of God, sent to be the Saviour, in the fulness of time was made of a woman, or became incarnate; and though he only took flesh, the three divine persons were concerned in this affair; the Father provided a body for him in his purposes and decrees, council and covenant; the word or Son was made flesh, and dwelt among men, and that which was conceived in the virgin, was of the Holy Ghost, Heb. x. 5. John i. 14. Matt. i. 20. and in the message to the virgin, and the declaration of this mysterious affair to her by the angel, mention is made distinctly of all the three Persons; there is the highest, Jehovah the Father; and the Son of the highest, who took flesh of the virgin; and the Holy Ghost, or the power of the highest, to whose overshadowing influence, the mysterious incarnation is ascribed, Luke i. 32, 35. Christ, the Son of God, being incarnate, was anointed with the Holy Ghost, his gifts and graces without measure; whereby, as man, he was fitted and qualified for his office as Mediator. The anointer is said to be God, his God, the great Jehovah; the anointed, the Son of God in human nature, called therefore the Christ of God, the true Messiah; what he was anointed with was the Holy Ghost, his gifts and grace, signified by the oil of gladness; see Psal. xlv. 7. Isai. lxi. 1. Acts x. 38. when he was thirty years of age he was baptized of John in Jordan, where all the three divine persons appeared; the Son in human nature, submitting to the ordinance of baptism; the Father by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son; and the holy Spirit, descending on him as a dove, Matt. iii. 16, 17. This was always reckoned so full and clear a proof of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, that it was a common saying with the ancients, go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity. Before our Lord's sufferings and death, he gave out several promises to his disciples that he would send the holy Spirit, the Comforter, to them; in which there are plain traces of a Trinity of Persons; as when he says, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter*, John xiv. 16. Here is God the Father of Christ, who is prayed unto, who is one Person: and here is the Son in human nature, praying, a second Person, the Son of God; and because he was so, his prayer was always prevalent; nor could he be a mere creature, who speaks so positively and authoritatively, he shall give you; and then there is another Comforter prayed for, even the Spirit of truth, distinct from the Father and the Son; the same may be observed in verse 26. and in chap. xv. 26. and xvi. 7. Christ by his sufferings and death, obtained eternal redemption for men. The price that was paid for it, was paid to God the Father: so it is said, *hath redeemed us to God by thy blood*, Rev. v. 9. What gave the price a sufficient value was, the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, 1 John i. 7. and it was through the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God, Heb. ix. 14. which some understand of the divine nature; but it is not usual to say, Christ did this, or the other thing, through the divine nature, but by the Spirit, as in Matt. xii. 28. Acts i. 2. besides, in some copies of Heb. ix. 14. it is read, through the holy Spirit. Again, Christ having suffered and died for men, he rose again for their justification; in which all the three persons were concerned; God the Father raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, 1 Pet. i. 20. and he raised himself by his own power, according to his own prediction, John ii. 19. and was *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness*, or the holy Spirit, *by the resurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. see also Rom. viii. 11.

v. This truth of a Trinity in the Godhead, shines in all the acts of grace towards or in men: in the act of justification; it is God the Father that justifies, by imputing the righteousness of his Son, without works, Rom. iii. 30, and iv. 6. and viii. 33. and it is not only by the righteousness of Christ that men are justified; but he himself justifies by his knowledge, or by faith in him, Isai. liii. 11. and it is the Spirit of God that pronounces the sentence of justification in the conscience of believers; hence they are *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. in the act of adoption; the grace of the Father in bestowing such a favour on any of the children of men, is owned, 1 John iii. 1. and through the grace of Christ, a way is opened, by redemption wrought out by him, for the reception of this blessing; and he it is that gives power to those that believe in him, to become the sons of God, Gal. iv. 4, 5. 1 John i. 12. and the holy Spirit witnesses their adoption to them; hence he is called the Spirit of adoption, Rom. viii. 15, 16. and all three appear in one text, respecting this blessing of grace; *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father, Gal.* iv. 6. where the Father is spoken of as a distinct from the Son, and the Son from the Father, and the Spirit from them both, and all three bear their part in this wonderful favour. Regeneration is an evidence of adoption; and an instance of the great love and abundant mercy of God; and which is sometimes ascribed to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 3. and sometimes to the Son of God, who regenerates and quickens whom he will, John v. 21. 1 John ii. 29. and sometimes to the Spirit of God, John iii. 3, 5. and all three are mentioned together in Tit. iii. 4—6. where God the Father, called our Saviour, is said to save by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which grace of his is shed abroad in men through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Once more, their unction, or appointing, which they receive from the holy One, is from God the Father, in and through Christ, and by the Spirit; *Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. where God the Father is represented as the establisher and anointer, and Jesus Christ, as a distinct person, in whom the saints are established and anointed; and the Spirit, distinct from them both, as the earnest of their future glory.

VI. It plainly appears there is a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, from the worship and duties of religion enjoined on good men, and performed by them. The ordinance of baptism, a very solemn part of divine worship, is ordered to be administered, and is administered, when done rightly, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, Matt. xxviii. 19. which are to be understood, not of three names and characters, but of three persons distinctly named and described, and who are but one God, as the singular word name, prefixed to them, signifies; men are to be baptized in one name of three persons; but not into one of three names, as an ancient writer[n] has observed; nor into three incarnates; but into three of equal honour and glory. God alone is to be invoked in prayer and petitions are directed sometimes to one Person, and sometimes to another; sometimes to the first Person, the God and Father of Christ, Eph. iii. 14. sometimes to Christ himself, the second Person, as by Stephen, Acts vii. 59. and sometimes to the Lord the Spirit, the third Person, 2 Thess. iii. 5. and sometimes to all three together, Rev. i. 4, 5. and whereas the saints, who are made light in the Lord, need an increase of light, prayer is made for them, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that is, of Christ, Eph. i. 17, 18. where the Father of Christ is prayed to; the Spirit of wisdom is prayed for; and that for an increase in the knowledge of Christ, distinct from them both: and whereas the saints need an increase of strength, as well as light, prayer is made for them, that the Father of Christ would strengthen them by his Spirit in the inward man, Eph. iii. 14—16. see Zech. x. 12. and in a forementioned text, prayer is made to the divine Spirit, to direct the hearts of good men into the love of God, and patient waiting for Christ, 2 Thess. iii. 5. where again the three divine Persons are plainly distinguished; and who may easily be discerned as distinct Persons, in the benedictory prayer of the apostle, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. with which I shall conclude the proof from scripture, of a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine essence; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* To which may be added; that a plurality of Persons in the Godhead, seems necessary from the nature of God himself, and his most compleat happiness; for as he is the best, the greatest and most perfect of Beings, his happiness in himself must be the most perfect and compleat; now happiness lies not in solitude, but in society; hence the three personal distinctions in Deity, seem necessary to perfect happiness, which lies n that most glorious, inconceivable, and inexpressible communion the three Persons have with one another; and which arises from the incomprehensible inbeing, and unspeakable nearness they have to each other, John x. 38. and xiv. 10, 11.

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[n] Ignat. Epist. ad Philip. Ascript. p. 100. Ed. Voss.

OF THE PERSONAL RELATIONS; OR, RELATIVE PROPERTIES WHICH DISTINGUISH THE THREE DIVINE PERSONS IN THE DEITY.

SINCE there are Three who are the one God; and these Three are not one and the same Person, but three different Persons, there must be something which distinguishes them from each other; and the distinction between them is not merely nominal, which is no distinction at all; as when the Sabellians say, God is one Person, having three names, Father, Son, and Spirit; here is no distinction; just as when a man has three names, they no more distinguish him than one would; be he called William, Henry, Frederick, William would not distinguish him from Henry, nor Henry from William, nor Frederick from them both, he being one man, having these several names: nor is the distinction merely modal; rather real modal; for though there are three modes of subsisting in the Deity, and each Person has a distinct mode, yet the phrase seems not strong enough; for the distinction is real and personal; the Three in the Godhead are not barely three modes, but three distinct Persons in a different mode of subsisting, who are really distinct from each other; so that the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, nor the holy Spirit either the Father or the Son; but the difficulty is, what that is which gives or makes the distinction between them? Now let it be observed,

I. Be it what it may, which distinguishes the divine Persons, it must be as early as the existence of God itself: God is from everlasting to everlasting; what God is now he ever was; he is the eternal and immutable *I AM*; he is what he was, and will be what he is; he is he "which is, and was, and is to come;" he is eternally and invariably the same; if the one God existed from eternity; and if the three Persons are the one God, they must exist from eternity, and exist as distinct Persons; and consequently what gives them their distinction must exist as early. Wherefore,

II. Whatever distinguishes them, cannot arise from, nor depend upon any works done by them in time, since their distinction is from eternity; and besides, the works of God *ad extra*, or his external works, are common to all the three Persons; for though one may be more commonly ascribed to one person, and another to another, yet the three persons have a concern in each; and therefore they cannot distinguish them from one another. Creation is commonly ascribed to the Father of Christ, who is said to make the worlds, and create all things by him his Son; not as a mere instrument of action, since he is a co-efficient Cause of them; "without him is not any thing made that is made;" and the holy Spirit has a concern in the same; as has been observed; see Psal. xxxiii. 6. The salvation of men is commonly attributed to the son, and he is called Jesus Christ our Saviour; and yet, in the same place, God the Father is called God our Saviour, and is said to save "by the renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. iii. 4—6. Regeneration is more commonly said to be the work of the Spirit; and yet men are said to be born of God, of the Father, and of Jesus Christ, as well as of him; and God the Father is expressly said, to beget men again, according to his mercy, 1 Pet. i. 3. I have made use of the works of God, both to prove the Being of God, and to illustrate and confirm the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; but these do not make God to be, but to appear to be what he is; had they never been wrought, he would have been just the same as he is, in his Being, Perfections, and Persons; for,

III. His works are arbitrary, depending upon his pleasure: thus of the works of creation it is said, *For thy pleasure*, or by thy will, *they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. and as all things in providence, so all things in grace, are done according to the counsel of his will; it is of his will he has mercy on men, is gracious to them, regenerates and saves them; wherefore these are things that might or might not be, just as he thought fit; but not so his Being, the Persons in the Deity, and their manner of subsisting in it; for if there had never been a creature made, nor a soul saved, nor a sinner sanctified, God would have been the same he is, three Persons in one God. In the oeconomy of man's salvation, to which some ascribe the distinction of Persons, as taking its rise from thence; the three divine Persons are manifested, but not made, nor made distinct; but were so before, and would have been so, if that had never taken place, as it might not have done, since it flows from the good will and pleasure of God; whereas,

IV. What gives the distinction, be it what it may, is by necessity of nature; God exists necessarily, and not by choice and will, as has been before argued; for if his existence is owing to will and choice, it must be either the will and choice of another, or his own; not another's, for then that other would be prior and superior to him, and so be God, and not he; not his own will, for then he must be before he was; have will and choice before he existed, which is an absurdity not to be endured: if the one God then necessarily existed, and the three Persons are the one God, they must necessarily exist; and if they exist as three distinct Persons, that which gives them the distinction, must be necessary also, or arise from the necessity of nature; as God is, and the manner in which he is, so the distinction in him is by necessity. But,

V. When I say it is by necessity of nature, I do not mean, that the divine nature, in which the divine persons subsist, distinguishes them; for that nature is one, and common to them all; the nature of the Son, is the same with that of the Father; and the nature of the Spirit, the same with that of the Father and the Son; and this nature, which they in common partake of, is undivided; it is not parted between them, so that one has one part, and another a second, and another a third; nor that one has a greater, and another a lesser part, which might distinguish them; but the whole fulness of the Godhead is in each.

VI. To come to the point; It is the personal relations, or distinctive relative properties, which belong to each Person, which distinguish them one from another; as paternity in the first Person, filiation in the second, and spiration in the third; or, more plainly, it is begetting, Psal. ii. 7. which peculiarly belongs to the first, and is never ascribed to the second and third; which distinguishes him from them both; and gives him, with great propriety, the name of Father; and and it is being begotten, that is the personal relation, or relative property of the second Person; hence called, "the only begotten of the Father," John i. 14. which distinguishes him from the first and third, and gives him the name of the Son; and the relative property, or personal relation of the third Person is, that he is breathed by the first and second persons; hence called, the breath of the Almighty, the breath of the mouth of Jehovah the Father, and the breath of the mouth of Christ the Lord, and which is never said of the other two persons; and so distinguishes him from them, and very pertinently gives him the name of the Spirit, or breath, Job xxxiii. 4. Psal. xxxiii. 6. 2 Thess. ii. 8. Those men I have now respect to, hold that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, or divine nature; and therefore it must be something in the divine nature, and not any thing out of it, that distinguishes them; not any works *ad extra*, done by them; nor their concern in the oeconomy of man's salvation; nor offices bore by them, which are arbitrary things, which might, or might not have been, had it pleased God; and what that is in the divine nature that can distinguish them, besides what has been mentioned, let it be named if it can. If one of these distinct Persons is a Father, in the divine nature, and another a Son, in the divine nature, there must be something in the divine nature, which is the ground of the relation, and distinguishes the one from the other, and can be nothing else than generation, and which distinguishes the third Person from them both, as neither begetting nor begotten. From generation arises the relation, and from relation distinct personality. And as an ancient writer[*] says, "unbegotten, begotten, and proceeding," are not names of essence, (and it may be added, nor of office,) but are modes of subsistence; and so distinguish persons.

Upon the whole, it is easy to observe, that the distinction of Persons in the Deity, depends on the generation of the Son; take away that, which would destroy the relation between the first and second Persons, and the distinction drops; and that this distinction is natural and necessary, or by necessity of nature, and not arbitrary, or of choice and will: which if it was, it might not have been at all, or have been otherwise than it is: those who place it to the oeconomy of the Persons in the redemption of men, have been urged with this, that if it was so, he that is called the Father, might have been called the Son; and he that is called the Son, might have been called the Father[p]; which has so pressed them, that they have been obliged to own, that so it might have been, if it had so seemed to God, and been agreeable to his will[q]. Moreover, those who are in this way of thinking, and explain away the generation of the Son, and make it no more than a communion of nature, and a co-existence with the first Person, though they profess there are three Persons in the Godhead, they are not able to prove it, nor to point out that which distinguishes one from another; and besides, are not able to call them by any name, only say, the one is the first Person, the other the second, and the other the third; and even the reason of this order they cannot account for; for if they have their names and distinction from the oeconomy of man's salvation, and the part they take therein these cannot be given them antecedent to the said oeconomy; and yet they must exist, and be considered as existing previous to it: if the first Person has the name of a Father, from his constituting and appointing Christ to be the Mediator and Saviour; and the Second Person the name of a Son, from his constitution as such; though the reason of such names from hence does not appear; and the third Person has the name of Spirit, from an office or work undertook by him, to breathe into men, in creation or regeneration; these names cannot be given them antecedent to such oeconomy, constitution, and agreement, taking place; and yet they must be considered antecedent thereunto, in some view or another. To such straits are men reduced, when they leave the form of sound words, which to do is dangerous, and generally leads into one error or another. But all this will more manifestly appear, by considering each divine person particularly, his relative property, and name pertinent to it.

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[*] Justin. Expos. Fid. p. 373.

The first Person; whose distinctive relative property is begetting, and who is very pertinently called the Father, which distinguishes him from the second and third Persons: and here let it be observed, that it is not his being a Father with respect to the creatures, that distinguishes him; not a Father in creation, providence, and grace: not in creation; he is a Father as the Creator of all; all his creatures are his offspring; and he is particularly the Father of spirits, of angels, and of the souls of men; but this does not give him the name of Father in the Trinity; so he would have been, if not one man had ever been made, or an angel formed; nor does his being a Father to creatures distinguish him from the second and third Persons: for they are equally concerned with him in creation; and being the one God that has made us, they are the one Father of us, even the second and third Persons, as well as the first: nor in providence; God is the Father that provides for all his creatures, supplies them with things necessary, and supports them in their Beings; but this is not peculiar to the first Person; in this the second Person jointly and equally operates with him, by whom all things consist, and by whose power all are upheld; and so the third Person; and therefore on this account equally entitled to the character of Father: nor in grace, in adoption, and regeneration; in which all the three Persons have a concern: in adoption, as the Father bestows the wonderful grace on the sons of men, the Son gives to them that believe in him power to become the sons of God; and the Spirit has so much to do with it, that he is called the Spirit of adoption: in regeneration, the Father of Christ begets men again to a lively hope of an inheritance; the Son quickens and regenerates whom he will; and those that are born again are born of the Spirit: it is not therefore what the first Person does in either of these respects, that entitles him to the character of Father in the Godhead, and distinguishes him from the others; but it is his being the Father of the second Person, or the Father of Christ, as he is often called, and very emphatically and significantly, God the Father, Gal. i. 1. Eph. i. 3. and iii. 14. and this name he has from begetting the Son, who is therefore called his Son, his begotten, his only begotten Son, Psal. ii. 7. John i. 14, 18. and this personal relation, or relative property, is what distinguishes the first Person in the Trinity, it being never attributed to any other.

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[p] Vitring. Epilog. Disput. contr. Roel. p. 3, 4. [q] Roel. Dissert. 2. s. 39. p. 40.

The second Person, whose distinctive relative property and character is, that he is begotten, which is never said of the other two Persons, and so distinguishes him from them, and gives him the name of Son; and that he is the Son of God, there is abundant proof; all the three Persons bear testimony of it; the Father at the baptism and transfiguration of Christ, Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. see Psal. ii. 7. and lxxxix. 27. the Word, or Son of God himself, John xix. 7. and v. 17, 18. and x. 30. Mark xiv. 61, 62. John viii. 13—18. and the Spirit, Matt. iii. 16, 17. it is testified and acknowledged by angels, the good angels, Luke i. 31, 35. Heb. i. 6. evil angels, the devils, Matt. viii. 29. Mark iii. 11. Luke iv. 41. by men of all sorts; by good men, John i. 6, 7, 33, 34, 49. Matt. xvi. 15, 16. John vi. 67. and xi. 27. Acts viii. 37. by bad men, Matt. xxvii. 54. So that he is on all hands acknowledged and owned to be the Son of God. The Sonship of Christ is an article of the greatest importance in the christian religion; it has a very great concern in, and connection with the ordinance of christian baptism; it was declared by a voice from heaven, at the baptism of our Lord, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Matt. iii. 17. That ordinance is ordered by our Lord himself to be administered *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,* Matt. xxviii. 19, considered as in their natural relative characters to each other, equally divine persons, and not as sustaining any office, which no one name or term used is expressive of; and it is mentioned in the first confession of faith, and as the sum of it, in order to an admission to that ordinance the scripture gives an account of; I believe, says the Eunuch desiring baptism of Philip; who required an express declaration of his faith; *I believe,* says he, *that Jesus Christ* *is the Son of God*, Acts viii. 37. and this was the sum and substance of the ministry of the apostle Paul, with which he first set out, and continued in, that Christ is the Son of God, Acts ix. 20. 2 Cor. i. 19. and indeed, it is the distinguishing criterion of the christian religion, and what gives it the preference to all others, and upon which all the important doctrines of it depend; even upon the Sonship of Christ as a divine person; and as by generation, even eternal generation. Without this the doctrine of the Trinity can never be supported; of this the adversaries of it are so sensible, as the Socinians, that they have always set themselves against it with all their might and main; well knowing, that if they can demolish this, it is all over with the doctrine of the Trinity; for without this, the distinction of Persons in the Trinity can never be maintained; and, indeed, without this, there is none at all; take away this, and all distinction ceases. A writer of the present age, and who was the first among us who objected to the eternal generation of the Son of God, though Roell, a Dutchman, before him, attempted to explain it away; or, at least, to a different sense; indeed, pretends to hold the doctrine of three distinct persons in the Deity, and yet explodes this: a strange paradox! he owns[r] some divines have strenuously maintained, and judiciously defended, the doctrine of the Trinity who held the eternal generation of the Son, and the procession of the Holy Ghost. Why then should this judicious defence be deserted by us? he owns that these properties, begetting, begotten, and proceeding, plainly prove the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be distinct persons; why then should they be laid aside? and especially, since without them there is no proof to be made of their being distinct Persons in the divine nature. He says[s], that his account of Christ's Sonship, that is, by office, and not by nature, does not take away any argument by which we prove his Deity. But without his eternal generation no proof can be made of his being a distinct divine Person in the Godhead, and so not of his Deity: he farther says, that it does not take away any argument to prove his distinct personality from the Father and the Holy Ghost; whereas it takes away that which is the only proof of it, without substituting a sufficient one in its room; and, indeed, no other in the divine nature can be substituted in its room; not the office of Christ, as Mediator; for he must first be proved to be a distinct divine Person, before he can be considered as Mediator. The doctrines of redemption, justification, atonement, and pardon of sin, depend upon the divinity of the Person of Christ, as the Son of God. Gal. iv. 4. Rom. viii. 3, 4. Heb. i. 2, 3. 1 John i. 7.

I cannot see there is any reason to object to the use of the phrase eternal generation, as applied to the sonship of Christ, since one divine person is said to beget, Psal. ii. 7. and therefore must be a Father; and another divine person is said to be begotten, John i. 14, 18. and elsewhere, and therefore must be a Son; and if a begotten Son, as he is often said to be, then he must be a Son by generation: for he must be a very illiterate man indeed who does not know that to beget and generate are the same, and that also to be begotten and generated are the same; and therefore generation, with great propriety, may be used of the divine persons; and if used of the divine persons as in the divine nature, as if of the Father in the divine nature, then of the Son in the divine nature; and there being nothing in the divine nature but what is eternal, then this generation must be eternal generation; there are no persons in the divine nature but who are eternal, the eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit; nor is there any thing in it but what is eternal; every attribute in it is eternal, as eternal power, eternal wisdom, &c. every will, decree, and purpose in it is eternal, the eternal birth of the eternal mind[1]; why not then the Son of God, the Word and Wisdom of God? and indeed Wisdom, or Christ, is expressly said to be brought forth, חוללתי, a word expressive of generation, twice used in Prov. viii. 24, 25. and there, in some ancient versions, rendered begotten, as אמון brought up, v. 30. is in some later versions rendered carried in the bosom, as a son in the bosom of the Father; all which is spoken of as done in eternity: now if Christ was begotten from everlasting, or ever the earth was, before there were any fountains of water, or mountains and hills, and was as early as a son in the bosom of his father, one would think there can be no difficulty in admitting his eternal generation. To which may be added, that if no moment or instant can be given or pointed at, neither in eternity nor in time, in which Christ was not the begotten Son of the Father, then he must be eternally begotten of him, or be his Son by eternal generation; but no moment and instant can be given or pointed at, neither in eternity nor in time, in which Christ was not the begotten Son of the Father; therefore he must be eternally begotten of him; or, in other words, be the Son of the Father by eternal generation. The phrase eternal generation is said to be a contradiction in terms; surely, not more so, than eternal creation, and an eternal creature: it may be thought so by those who will say the same of a Trinity in Unity, or of three being one, though expressly asserted in 1 John v. 7. and so is no more a contradiction than a Trinity of persons in one God. Indeed if the phrase was used of human generation, and applied to that, it might well be thought to be a contradiction in terms; but not as used of divine generation, and as applied to that; the one being in a nature finite, the other infinite. Perhaps the distinction of a priority of order, and a priority of time, may serve to remove the seeming contradiction; the former may be in things eternal, but not the latter. Thus, for instance, God is eternal, and so are his decrees; as the decree of election, or rather God's act of choosing men before the foundation of the world; now God may be conceived of as previous to his act of choosing in priority of order, though not in priority of time, which cannot be admitted in eternity. So the Father generating the Son, may be considered in priority of order previous the Son generated by him, though not in priority of time, of which there can be none in eternity;

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[r] Ridgley's Body of Divinity, vol. 1. p. 121. [s] Ibid. p. 127.

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[1] Zeph. ii. 2. בטרם לדת חק antequam nascatur decretum, Sheindler. Lexic. col. 759. antequam edatur edictum, Castalio: that is, before the decree conceived or begotten in the mind of God from eternity, is born or brought forth into open execution.

considering therefore the Son's generation of the Father from eternity, in a priority of order, though there can be none of time, it will not appear to be a contradiction in terms.

When the scriptures ascribe generation to the Divine Being, it must be understood in a manner suitable to it, and not of carnal and corporal generation; no man in his senses can ever think that God generates as man does; nor believe that ever any man held such a notion of generation in God; yet Socinus[u] has the impudence to say that some called Evangelics, hold that God generates in the divine essence one like himself, *more animantium*, as animals do. But generation must be understood of such generation as agrees with the nature of a spirit, and of an infinite uncreated spirit, as God is; that spirits generate we know from the souls or spirits we have about us and in us; our minds, which are spirits, generate thought; thought is the conception and birth of the mind; and so we speak of it in common and ordinary speech, I conceive, or such a man conceives so and so; this is my conception of things, such are the conceptions of others, &c. So with the Platonic philosophers, thought is the birth of the mind; they call it the mind begotten by the mind, as it were another like itself[w]; now as soon as the mind is, thought is, they commence together and they co-exist, and always will; and this the mind begets within itself, without any mutation or alteration in itself. Now in some respect these answer: the mind to God who is Νους, the eternal mind, and thought, the birth of the mind, to Christ, the eternal Λογος, word and wisdom of God; who is in some sort represented by λογος ενδιαθετος, the internal mental word So Plato[x] says, "thought is λογος, word or speech, by which the soul declares and explains to itself what it considers;" or elsewhere[y], "thought is a discourse within the soul to itself, without a voice." Aristotle[z] somewhere calls it the λογος, or word, τω νοι συναιδιον, co-eternal with the mind. Now if our finite created spirits, or minds, are capable of generating thought, the internal word or speech, and that without any motion, change or alteration, without any diminution and corruption, without division of their nature or multiplication of their essence; then in an infinitely more perfect manner can God, an infinite uncreated spirit, beget his Son, the eternal Word, wisdom, reason, and understanding, in his eternal mind, which he never was without, nor was he before it: *In the beginning was the word, &c.* John i. 1. and this same Word is expressly said to be *the only begotten of the Father*, 14. and this perfectly agreeable to the sense and language of the old Jewish church, as appears from the ancient paraphrases, and from Philo[a], who says of the Λογος, or Word, that it is not unbegotten as God, nor begotten as men, and that it is the first begotten Son, with other expressions of like nature: these things considered, may serve in some measure to relieve our minds, and make it more easy to us to conceive of this wonderful and myste rious affair. "Mental or metaphysical generation, as a learned divine[b] observes, is a similitude and adumbration of divine generation; as the mind begets by nature, not by power, so likewise God; as the mind begets a birth co-essential and co-eternal, so God; as the mind simple and perfect begets a birth simple and perfect, so God; as the mind begets immutably (or without mutation) so God; as the mind begets of itself in itself, so God; as the mind does not beget out of matter without itself, so neither God; as the mind always begets and cannot but beget, so God the Father; as metaphysical generation abides, so the divine." Not but that there is in some respects a great dissimilitude between these, as the same writer observes; for the mind begets only a faculty, or an inexistent propriety, but God the Father begets a person existing by himself; the mind begins to beget in time, but God begins not to beget, but always begets from eternity, &c. To this may be added another similitude, which may help us in this matter, and serve to illustrate it; and that is the sun, to which God is sometimes compared; the sun generates its own ray of light, without any change, corruption, division and diminution; it never was without its ray of light, as it must have been had it been prior to it; they commenced together and co-exist, and will as long as the sun endures; and to this there seems to be an allusion, when Christ is called the brightness, *απαυγασμα*, the effulgence, the beaming forth *of his Father's glory*, Heb. i. 3. *ut radius ex sole*, as the ray from the sun, as Tertullian[c] expresses it. Though such allusions are not to be stretched too far, nor admitted where they imply any imperfection.

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[u] Quod Regn. Polon. c. 4. s. 2. p. 698. Opera, vol. 1. [w] Vid. Zanchium de Natura Dei. c. 7. p. 145. [x] In Theæteto, p. 138. Ed. Ficin. [y] In Sophista, p. 184. [z] Apud Polan. Syntagm. Theolog. l. 3. c. 4. p. 202. [a] Quis Rer. Divin. Hæres. p. 509. de Agricult. p. 195. de Confus. Ling. p. 341.

It will be granted that the phrases begetting and begotten, as attributed to the divine persons in the godhead, are used in reference to human generation; between which and divine generation there is some resemblance; as likeness, sameness of nature, personality, &c. and as we consider divine generation, it comes nearer to generation, properly so called, than any scheme or hypothesis opposed to it; but then care must be taken to remove from our minds every thing carnal and impure; and what implies an imperfection; as division of nature, multiplication of essence, priority and posteriority, motion, mutation, alteration, corruption, diminution, cessation from operation, &c. to reason from the one to the other, as running parallel to each other, is unreasonable; to argue from human to divine generation; from that which is physical, or natural, to that which is hyperphysical, or supernatural; from what is in finite nature, to that which is in a nature infinite, unbounded and eternal, is very irrational; and to reason from the one to the other, without limitation, restriction, care and caution, is very unsafe and dangerous; since it may lead unawares into foolish and hurtful errors; and when objections of this sort are made, as they too often are, in a vain, ludicrous and wanton manner, they are to be rejected and detested, as impious and blasphemous; and they that make them are not to be disputed with, but despised: what is objected in a modest and decent way may be attended to; and the chief that I have met with are, that the sonship

[b] Polanus ut supra, p. 304.

[c] Adv. Praxeam, c. 18. 22.

of Christ by generation makes him to be later than the Father, to be dependent on him, and subordinate to him; or in other words, that it seems to be contrary to his eternity, independence, and equality. Let us a little consider each of these objections.

1. It is urged, that he that generates must be before him that is generated; a father that begets must be before the son that is begotten by him; and putting the sonship of Christ on this foot, he cannot be co-eternal with the Father, but must have a beginning. This is the old stale objection of the Arians, and of Arius[d] himself, who stumbled at this, and set out with it, reasoning thus, "If the Father begat the Son, he that is begotten must have a beginning of his existence; and from hence it must be evident that there was a time when he was not a Son; and therefore it must necessarily follow, that he has his subsistence out of nothing." And so Aetius[e], a follower of his, could not understand how that which is begotten, could be co-eternal with him that begets. But a little attention to a plain rule will set this matter in a clear light, and remove this objection: the rule is, and I think it is a good one, and will hold good, that "correlates mutually put or suppose each other;" that is, they commence together, they exist together, they co-exist, and that one is not before the other, nor the one after the other. Now father and son are correlates, they suppose each other; a father supposes a son, and a son supposes a father; they commence and exist together, they co-exist, they are not one before nor after another: the father, as a father, is not before his son, as such; nor the son, as a son, is not later than his father, as such; let a man have a first-born son, as soon as he has one he becomes a father, and not before; and his son is as early a son as he is a father; and supposing they live together a term of years, be it an hundred years if you please, which is not an unreasonable supposition, since it has been a fact, that father and son have lived together a longer term of time; now at the end of these hundred years, the father, as a father, will not be a moment older than the son, as such; nor the son, as a son, one moment younger than the father, as such; their relations rise and continue together till one or other of them cease. There is no priority nor posteriority, no before nor after in these relations; and so, as an ancient writer says[f], "with God there is no post-existence of him that is begotten, nor pre-existence of him that begets:" if there is an eternal Father, there must be an eternal Son, and therefore must be co-eternal; there cannot be a father without a Son, that would be an absurdity, and therefore not before him.

Should it be said, that though these mutual relations exist together, and that one is not before the other; yet surely he that is a father, though not as a father, must exist before him who is his son. As plausible as this may seem to be, it may not appear so plain when examined; for this objection may arise from a false notion of animal generation. Generation is not a production of a non-entity into being, or a bringing into existence what did not exist,

[d] Socrat. Hist. l. 1. c. 5. [e] Ib. l. 2. c. 35. [f] Justin. Qu. & Respons. qu. 16. p. 400.

before: for to bring that into being which was not in being before, is nothing less than a creation, and creation is too much to ascribe to the fathers of our flesh; they are not our creators, they do not give us our being; they do not bring us out of a state of none existence, into a state of existence; God only is the creator. According to the later discoveries in natural philosophy respecting generation, it appears that every man is born of an animalcula; that generation, so called, is no other than a motion of the animalcula into a more convenient place for nourishment and growth. All generation, say our modern philosophers, is with us nothing, so far as we can find, but nutrition, or augmentation of parts[g]: they conclude, that the animalcula of every tribe of creatures, were originally formed by the almighty Parent, to be the seed of all future generations of animals[h]; and that it seems most probable, that the *semina*, or *stamina*, as of all plants, so of animals that have been, or ever shall be in the world, have been formed *ab origine mundi*, by the Almighty Creator, within the first of each respective kind[i]; and that these are no other than the entire bodies themselves *in parvo*; and contain every one of the same parts and members, with the compleat bodies themselves, when grown to maturity[k]; all which they say, evidently appears, by the help of microscopes: and this is the rather to be attended to, because it so greatly agrees with the sacred scriptures, by which it appears, not only that Levi, the great-grandson of Abraham, was in his loins, that is, seminally in him, before his father Jacob was born; but that all mankind were in Adam, that is, seminally in him, as well as representatively; the former being the foundation of the latter, Rom. v. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 22. If, therefore, the *semina* of all mankind were created together in the first man; and all men were seminally, and in animalcula together in Adam, then not one before another, no priority nor posteriority among them: so that these things, rightly considered, instead of weakening, serve to strengthen and illustrate the doctrine pleaded for[l]. How far this philosophy is defensible, I will not say; I only observe it to abate the force of the objection; and the confidence of those who make it, it being not easy to disprove the said hypothesis.

II. As to the objection taken from dependence, suggesting that the doctrine of Christ's Sonship by generation, is contrary to the independence of Christ as a divine Person. It may be asked, what dependence has a Son upon a Father, in animal generation? Does he depend upon him as the cause of his existence? He does not. He does not bring him into being. God only is the efficient Cause and Author of his Being. He is, at most, only an instrument of removing the animalcula, created of God, into a more convenient situation for nourishment and growth; in order, at a proper time, to come forth into the world, according to the above hypothesis: a parent has no concern in the formation of his child; it is formed without his knowledge, and without asking his consent and will; he knows nothing of its shape, features, and sex, until its birth; and when it is born, its life, and the continuance of its being, do not depend upon him; a son lives when a father dies, and often many years after him; it is true, in some sense, he may be said to depend upon him with respect to some circumstances, especially in the former part of life; as, for the care of him, provision for him, assistance and protection given him, circumstances which argue weakness in the human nature; but not to be found in the divine nature, nor any thing analogous to them; and does not a father oftentimes depend upon his son, as in case of distress, sickness, penury, and old age. But be these things as they may, Christ, as all sound divines hold, is *αυτοθεος*, God of himself, and independent of any other, though he is the Son of the Father; and as the distinct personality of the Son of God arises from his relation to his Father as such, so the distinct personality of the Father arises from his relation to his Son as such; hence the distinct personality of the one, is no more dependent, than the distinct personality of the other; and both arise from their mutual relation to each other; and both arise and commence togeher, and not one before the other; and both are founded in eternal generation.

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[g] Whiston's New Theory of the Earth, book 4. chap. 1. p. 299, 300.

[h] Wolaston's Religion of Nature delineated, s. 5. p. 160, 164. Ed. 8.

[i] Philosophical Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 922. Nieuwentyt's Religious Philosopher, contempl. 23. s. 19. p. 711. Ed. 5. see vol. 3. contempl. 27. s. 9. p. 1019.

[k] Whiston, ut supra.

[l] See a farther use made of this philosophy in the articles of Original Sin, book 3. ch. 10, and of the Incarnation of Christ, part 2. book 1. chap. 2.

III. As to subordination and subjection, and inequality, which it is supposed the Sonship of Christ by generation implies; it may be answered, that Christ in his office-capacity, in which he, as Mediator, is a Servant, and as he is man, and appeared in the form of one; it will be acknowledged, that he is subordinate and subject to the Father; but not as he is the Son of God; and whatever inequality sonship may imply among men, it implies no such thing in the divine nature, among the divine persons; who in it subsist in perfect equality with one another; and in particular, the scriptures represent the Son of God as equal to his Father, as one who thought it no robbery to be equal with God; being of the same nature, and having the same perfections with him, and that he is equal to him, with respect to power and authority; for with respect to power he says, *I and my Father are one*; and they represent him as having the same claim to equal honour, homage, and worship; since all men are to honour the Son, as they honour the Father; not as in subordination to him, but as equal with him. There is a passage which is preverted by some to the sense of subordination and subjection of the Son of God to the Father, which is in 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father—and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him*; *and put all things under him*; *that God may be all in all.* It should be observed, that all this is said of something that is future; and which, as yet, is not, and so no proof of what is, or has been. Besides, there is a twofold Sonship of Christ, divine and human; from the one he is denominated the Son of God, and from the other the Son of man. Now Christ in the text, is only called the Son, which does not determine which Sonship is meant. This is to be learnt from the context, where he is spoken of throughout as man, as man who died, and rose again from the dead; from whence, by various arguments, is proved the general resurrection; and so he is continued to be spoken of to the passage under consideration; the plain and easy sense of which is, that at the end of the world, at Christ's second coming, when all the elect of God shall be gathered in, and Christ shall have compleatly finished his work, as Mediator, he will deliver up the mediatorial kingdom compleat and perfect, that is, the whole body of the elect, the kingdom of priests, to the Father, and say, *Lo, I, and the children whom thou hast given me*; and then the delegated power under which he acted, as the Son of man, will cease, and be no more; and that sort of rule, authority, and power, will be put down; and he, as the Son of man, be no longer vested with such authority, but shall become subject to him that put all things under him; and then God, Father, Son, and Spirit, will be all in all; and there will be no more distinction of offices among them; only the natural and essential distinctions of the divine Persons will always continue. There are various passages of scriptures in which Christ, as the Son of God, addresses his divine Father, without the least appearance of any subordination or subjection to him, but as his equal, as Jehovah's fellow, particularly John xvii. 24. But I shall proceed to examine more particularly, in what sense Christ is the Son of God, or what is the true cause and reason of this relation.

The Socinians, unwilling to own the eternal Sonship of Christ, or that he was the Son of God before he was the Son of Mary; and not caring to acknowledge the true cause and reason of it, which is but one, have devised many; which shews the puzzle and confusion they are in; Calovius[m] has collected out of their writings, no less than thirteen causes, or reasons of Christ's Sonship; some of them are so weak and trifling, as not deserving to be mentioned; and others require but little to be said to them; I shall take notice of some of the principal ones: and then proceed to place the Sonship of Christ on its true basis, and assign the proper sole cause and reason of it; his being begotten of the Father.

I. They say he is called the Son of God because of the great love of God to him, and make beloved and begotten to be synonymous terms; that Christ is the object of the love of God, the Son of his love, his dearly beloved Son, is most certain; but then it is not his love to him that is the foundation and cause of relation to him; he is not his Son because he loves him; but he loves him because he is his Son; it is not love among men that produces such a relation; there may be great love where there is no such relation; Jonathan loved David as his own soul; but this strong love bore to him, did not make him nor denominate him his son. On the other hand, there may be relation and not love; a father may not love his own son; neither love nor hatred effect relation; the one does not make it, nor the other destroy it.

II. Sometimes they ascribe the Sonship of Christ to his likeness of God, and make that to be the cause of it: that Christ is the image of the invisible God the express image of his Father's Person, and so like him, that he that has seen the one, has seen the other, because the same nature and perfections are in both, is true; yet the reason why Christ is called the Son of God, is not because he is like him, but he is like him because he is his Son; of the same nature and essence with him.

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[m] Socinism. Profligat. art. 2. controv. 6. p. 201.

III. At other times they tell us, he is the Son of God by adoption; of which the Scriptures give not the least hint. To which may be objected, that Christ is God's own Son, his proper Son, the Son of himself; and therefore not adopted: who ever adopts an own son? or what reason can there be for it? adoption among men, is not of their own sons: but usually when they have none of their own; as the instances of the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, and of Esther by Mordecai shew: besides, Christ is the begotten Son of God; and if begotten, then not adopted; these are inconsistent; yea, he is his only begotten Son; whereas, if he was his Son by adoption, he could not be said to be his only Son, since he has many adopted ones; even as many as are predestinated to the adoption of children, by Christ; as many as the Father gave unto him; as many as he has redeemed, "that they might receive the adoption of children;" as many as receive him, that is, believe in him, "to whom he gives power to become the sons of God;" even as many sons as he brings to glory; which is a number no man can number: but the more principal causes of Christ's Sonship they insist upon, and which seem to have the most countenance from scripture, are as follow, and which I shall more particularly and largely consider.

IV. The miraculous conception and birth of Christ, or his wonderful incarnation, is assigned as the reason of his Sonship; and this is founded on Luke i. 35. the words of the angel to Mary, in answer to the difficulties objected by her, to Christ being born of her; *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also, that holy Thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Now let it be observed, that the angel does not say the holy Thing born of the virgin should be, but should be called the Son of God; for though sometimes the sense of such a phrase is the same as to be, as in Isai. ix. 6. 1 John iii. 1. yet seems not intended here; since this appellation, the Son of God, is a name which Christ has been, and is usually called by; and the angel is not giving a reason of Christ's being the Son of God; for he was so before his incarnation; but of the manifestation and declaration of him as such in the human nature: nor does the angel predict that Christ should be called the Son of God, for this reason, because of his miraculous birth; for either he was to call himself so, or others were to call him so, for this reason, which neither have been; or else the angel's prediction must be false, which cannot be admitted. Moreover, the particle therefore, is not casual, but consequential; the angel is not giving a reason why Christ should be called the Son of God, but why he should be received and owned as such by his people; who would infer and conclude from his wondrous birth of a virgin, that e must be the Immanuel, the child to be born, the Son given, &c. prophesied of in Isai. vii. 14. and ix. 6. where he is called the child born, with respect to his human nature, and the Son given, with respect to his divine nature[n]; see ohn iii. 16. and iv. 10. Once more, the particle also, ought not to be neglected; Therefore, also, that holy Thing, &c. not only the divine person of Christ hould be owned and called the Son of God; but also the human nature of Christ hus wonderfully produced, being taken up into personal union with him, should ear the same name: so that it is not the wonderful birth of the human nature hat so much as gives the name; but the union of this nature to the person of he Son of God; whence it is called by the same name he is. The reasons why Christ cannot be the Son of God, on account of his wonderful incarnation are he following.

1. If so, then the holy Spirit must be the Father of Christ, since he had such special and peculiar concern in it; as the above passage shews; and then here must be two Fathers in the Trinity; which would introduce a wretched onfusion there. But there is but one, distinct from the Word and Spirit, John v. 7. Matt. xxviii. 19. Besides, the Father of Christ is, in many places, distinguished from the Spirit, and therefore cannot be the same, John xiv. 6, 17, 26. and xv. 26. Eph. i. 17. and iii. 14, 16. To which may be added, hat the Spirit is called the Spirit of the Son, Gal. iv. 6. whereas, if this was he case, rather the Son should be called the Son of the Spirit; which he ever is.

2. If the incarnation of Christ is the cause of his divine Sonship, then there was no God the Father of Christ under the Old Testament; this was what the Marcionites of old asserted; which put the ancient writers[o] on proving, as they id, that it was the Father of Christ who made the world, gave the law, spoke by the prophets, and endited the books of the Old Testament; all which appears from Heb. i. 1, 2. Besides, God existed as the Father of Christ, before he foundation of the world; for so early as such he blessed his people, and hose them in Christ, Eph. i. 3, 4.

3. If Christ was the Son of God with respect to his human nature only, the distinctive phrase according to the flesh, when used in speaking of him, would be quite impertinent; for it is never said of any mere man, that he is the son of such an one according to the flesh, but only, that he is his son; but the phrase is very pertinently used to distinguish Christ, the Son of God, according o his divine nature, from his being the Son of David, and of the fathers, according to his human nature, Rom. i. 4. and ix. 5.

4. The incarnation of Christ is not the reason of his being the Son of God, but the manifestation of him as such; he was not made, but manifested thereby o be the Son of God, 1 John i. 1, 2. and iii. 8. In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son—for what? not to be made a Son; he was so before he sent

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[n] Vitringa in loc.

[o] See Dr. Owen on the Trinity, p. 27.

him; but that this Son might be made of a woman, or be made man; that the Word might be made flesh, or become incarnate; and so God, the Son of God, be manifest in the flesh, Gal. iv. 4.

5. It is certain that Christ existed, as the Son of God, before his incarnation; and is spoken of in the Old Testament as such; even Nebuchadnezzar, an heathen prince, had a notion of the Son of God; which he might have from Daniel, and other Jews in his palace; for he had many in his dominions, from whom he might learn that there was a glorious Person, who would appear in human nature, under the name of the Son of God; and seeing four Persons in the fiery furnace, when only three were cast into it, and the form of the fourth remarkably glorious, he concluded him to be one like him, who had been described to him, Dan iii. 25. see Ezek. xxi. 10. Agur long before knew that a divine Person existed, as the Son of God; for speaking of the Almighty, and incomprehensible Being, he asks, *What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?* suggesting that as the name, that is, the nature of God is ineffable, he had a Son of the same nature with himself, equally so, Prov. xxx. 4. Earlier than he, David speaks of the Son of God, begotten by him; whom he calls all the Kings and Judges of the earth to pay divine homage and worship to; and pronounces them blessed that trust in him, Psal. ii. 7, 12. and speaks of him also as his first born, who should call him his God and Father, Psal. lxxxix. 26, 27. yea, Christ existed as a Son, not only before Solomon and David were, but before Melchisedec was, for he is said to be made like unto the Son of God, Heb. vii. 3. yea, he existed as such at the creation of the world; for God, by him his Son, made the worlds, Heb. i. 2. before any creature was in being he was the Son of God; and so the words may be rendered in Psal. lxxii. 17. *Before the sun was, his name was the Son*, the Son of God.

6. If Christ is only the Son of God as he was man, and so called because made man, then he would be in no other class of Sonship than creatures be. Adam being wonderfully made and created out of the dust of the earth, is called the son of God, and all his posterity are the offspring of God, Luke iii. 38. Acts xvii. 28. Angels are also the sons of God, by creation; but *to which of the angels said he* (God) *at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, Heb. i. 5. and if not to them, much less to any of the sons of men; and therefore Christ's filiation must be in an higher class than theirs; and not to be ascribed to his incarnation; but must be placed to another account.

V. Another cause or reason assigned by the Socinians why Christ is called the Son of God, is his resurrection from the dead; which cannot be the true reason of it; because,

1. He was the Son of God before; as has been proved, and they themselves acknowledge; for if he was the Son of God, through his incarnation, as they say, though wrongly, then before his resurrection; and so not on that account: the mission of Christ into this world, as the Son of God; the testimony bore to

his Sonship, at his baptism and transfiguration, by his divine Father; the confession of men and angels, good and bad, already observed; shew him to be the Son of God before his resurrection, and so not by it.

2. If he was the Son of God on that account, he must beget himself, and be the author of his own Sonship, which is notoriously absurd; for he raised himself from the dead, as he predicted he would; and as he had power to do, as he declared, and did it, John ii. 19. and x. 18.

3. If so, his Sonship must be metaphorical and figurative, and not proper; whereas, he is often called God's own Son, his proper Son, the Son of himself; and God his own proper Father, Rom, viii. 3, 32. John v. 18.

4. On this account, he cannot be called the only begotten Son of God; for though he may, indeed, on account of his resurrection, be called, as he is, the first-born from the dead, and the first begotten of the dead, and the first-fruits of them that sleep, Col. i. 18. Rev. i. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 20. yet cannot be called the only begotten, since many of the saints rose with him at his resurrection; and all men will be raised at the last day.

5. If the resurrection of the dead entitles to Sonship, then wicked men would be the sons of God; since there will be a resurrection of the unjust as well as of the just; of some to shame and damnation, as well as of others to everlasting life, Dan. xii. 2. John v. 28, 29. Acts xxiv. 15. yet these are never called the sons of God; as not on any other, so not on this account; indeed, the dead in Christ, who will rise first, are said to he the *children of God, being the children of the resurrection*, Luke xx. 36. not that they then become the children of God, and are so for that reason; for they are so before; but being raised, and put into the possession of the inheritance, they will be manifested, and declared the children of God, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;" and so,

6. The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is only a manifestation of his Sonship; he was *declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. and hence it is that the words in Psal. ii. 7. *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, are applied to the resurrection of Christ, Acts xiii. 25. not that he was then begotten as the Son of God, for he was so before, as has been proved; but he was then manifested to be the only begotten Son of God; and which words are applicable to any time when Christ was declared and manifested to be the Son of God.

VI. The last reason I shall take notice of, which the Socinians give of the Sonship of Christ, is his office as Mediator; they say he is called the Son of God, because he was sanctified, or set apart to his office, as such; and was sent into the world to do it, and has executed it, and is now exalted in heaven. And it is not to be wondered at, that they should assert Christ to be the Son of God by office, when it is a notorious sentiment of theirs, that he is only God by office; for the sake of which they endeavour to support this: the text which they build this notion on is John x. 36. *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of*

God? That Christ is the Son of God, may be concluded from his sanctification and mission; because no other was prophesied of, or promised to be sent, and no other expected to come, but he who was the Son of God; but that his sanctification and mission are the reason of his being so called, cannot be from hence concluded; because he was the Son of God before he was sent. Christ had, in the preceding verses, asserted his equality with God, saying, that he and his Father were one; upon this the Jews charged him with blasphemy; to vindicate himself from this charge, he first argues from his inferior character, as being in office; that if magistrates, without blasphemy, might be called Gods, and children of the most High, much more might he be called the Son of God, who was in such an eminent manner sanctified, and sent into the world by the Father; but then he let not the stress of the proof of his Deity and Sonship rest here; but proceeds to prove the same by his doing the same works his Father did; to which he appeals. But that Christ is not the Son of God, by his office as Mediator, the following reasons may be given.

1. Because if Christ is the Son of God, not by nature, but by office, then he is only the Son of God in an improper and metaphorical sense: as magistrates are called the children of the most High, or sons of God, being in an office under him: whereas, Christ, in a true and proper sense, is the Son of God; he is the *Son of the Father in truth*, 2 John 3. most truly and properly his Son; his own, his only begotten Son, the Son of himself, Rom. viii. 3. his proper Son, 32. therefore not so in an improper sense.

2. Because the mediatorial office of Christ is so far from being the ground of his Sonship, that it is his sonship that is the ground of his mediatorship; for antecedent to his investiture with his office, he must be considered as previously existing under some character or another, and which appears to be his relation to God as his Son. Thus in his inauguration into, and investiture with his kingly office, his Father, in the performance of it, addressed him under this relative character; *unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, Heb. i. 8. and of his consecration to his priestly Office we read, *The Lord maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law,* (the eternal council and covenant, made more clear and manifest since the law, Psal. cx. 4.) *maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore*; that is, not makes the Son a Son, but the Son a priest, Heb. vii. 28. so that he was the Son of God before he was considered as a priest: and with respect to his prophetic office, previous to his investiture with, entrance upon, and discharge of that, he was the Son of God; and, indeed, his relation to God, and nearness to him, made him the only fit and proper Person for it; *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*: his nature, will, purposes, and promises; all which he was privy to, as being the only begotten Son of the Father, and lying in his bosom, John i. 18. so that previous to his office as Mediator, and the several branches of it, he was the Son of God; and therefore not so by it: when, I say, Christ, as the Son of

God, must be considered previous to his being the Mediator; though he is both from eternity; it must be understood, not of priority of time, of which there is none in eternity; but of priority of order; for Christ must be considered as existing as a divine Person, under some character or relation, ere he can be considered as invested with an office; not in order of time, both being eternal; but in order of nature; even as the eternal God, must be considered as existing previous to any act of his; as of eternal election, not in priority of time, the eternal acts of God being as early as himself; but in priority of order, as one thing must be conceived of and considered by our finite minds, before another.

3. Because he is frequently distinguished as a Son, from the consideration of him in his mediatorial office; as in the Eunuch's confession of Faith; *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, Acts viii. 37. and in the ministry of the apostle Paul, who is said to preach *Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God*, Acts ix. 20. Now the phrase Jesus Christ respects his office as the Saviour, the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King; and if the other phrase, the Son of God, is a term of office also; they coincide, and signify the same thing; and then the sense of them only is, that Christ is the Christ, and the Mediator; the Mediator confessed by the one, and preached by the other; which carry in them no distinct ideas; whereas the meaning is, that the one believed, and the other preached, that Jesus, the Saviour and true Messiah, who had lately appeared with all the true characters of the promised one, was no less than a divine Person, the Son of God: see also 1 John iv. 14, 15. and v. 5.

4. Because Christ, as Mediator, is the Servant of God; and especially so he appears in the discharge of some parts of that his office; as in his obedience and suffering death, see Isai. xlii. 1. and xlix. 3. and liii. 11. Phil. ii. 7, 8. A servant and a son are very different relations, convey very different ideas; our Lord observes the distinction, John viii. 35. and Christ, as a Son, is distinguished from Moses, as a servant, in the house of God, Heb. iii. 5, 6. whereas, if Christ was a Son by office, or as mediator, he would be no other than a servant, as Moses was, only of an higher rank, and a greater office; no one is ever called a son because he is a servant; one that is a son may indeed be a servant, but is never called a son on that account; so that this is to lessen the glory of Christ, as the only begotten of the Father, and reduce him to the character and state of a servant.

5. Because the Sonship of Christ is sometimes spoken of as adding a lustre o his office as Mediator; as when the apostle says *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession*, Heb. iv. 14. that which makes this High Priest so great an one, and furnishes out so strong an argument to a constant profession of him, is his being the Son of God, not by office, but by nature; for if this was only a term of office, it would not only coincide with his being an high priest, but there would be no emphasis in it, nor evidence of his greatness; nor such strength in the argument formed upon it. Likewise, the Sonship of Christ is represented as putting a virtue and efficacy into what he has done as Mediator,

and therefore must be distinct from his office as such; so particularly the apostle John ascribes the efficacy of his blood, in cleansing from sin, to his being the Son of God; *And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son,* (there lies the emphasis) *cleanseth us from all sin,* 1 John i. 7. Sometimes it is observed, as wonderful, that he who is the Son of God, should perform some parts of his office as Mediator; as obedience and suffering death; *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered,* Heb. v. 1. but there would be nothing strange and wonderful, that he, being the Mediator, should perform the part of one; but it lies here, that he, being the Son of God, in the form of God, and equal to him, should appear in the form of a servant, and be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

6. Because the Sonship of Christ is made use of to express and enhance the love of God, in the gift of him to the sons of men, John iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9. which would not be so strongly expressed, and so greatly enhanced, and appear in such a glaring light, if Christ, in such a gift, is considered not as a Son by nature, but as a Servant, and in an office-capacity; God has given what is more than men, or than people, for the life of his chosen; to do which would be love; but he has given his own Son; which is a far greater instance of love, Isai. xliii. 4.

Lastly, If Christ is the Son of God, and may be called his begotten Son, by virtue of his constitution as Mediator, it should be shown, that there is something in that constitution which is analogous, or answers to generation and Sonship, and lays a sufficient ground and foundation for Christ being called God's own Son, his proper and only begotten Son; what is there in the first Person's appointing and constituting the second to be a Mediator, that gives him the name of a Father? and what is that in the constitution of the second Person in such an office, that gives him the name of the Son, of the only begotten Son?

Having removed the chief and principal of the false causes, and reasons of Christ's Sonship, assigned by the Socinians; I shall proceed to establish the true cause of it; and settle it on its true basis; by assigning it to its proper and sole cause, his eternal generation by the Father; which I shall attempt to do by various passages of scripture.

There are some passages of scripture, which have been made use of to prove the eternal generation of the Son of God, I shall not insist upon particularly Isai. liii. 8. *Who shall declare his generation?* which is to be understood, neither of the human, nor of the divine generation of Christ, as it was by the ancient writers; not of his human generation; for that the Prophet himself declared; as that he would be born, and be born of a virgin, chap. vii. 14. and ix. 6. nor of his divine generation, which is declared both by the Father and the Son; though, indeed, the manner of both generations is inexplicable and ineffable, and cannot be declared by men: but the words are either to be understood of Christ's spiritual generation; the seed he should see, 10. his spiritual seed and offspring; a generation to be accounted of, but not to be counted by men, their number being not to be declared: or, rather, of the wickedness of that age and generation in which Christ should appear in the flesh; called by him, a wicked, adulterous, and faithless generation; the wickedness then risen both in the Gentile and Jewish world, was such as not to be declared; and particularly the barbarity and cruelty of the Jews, in putting Christ to death, and persecuting his apostles, were such as no tongue and pen could fully declare.

I have not, in my treatise on the Trinity, insisted on Mic. v. 2. as a proof of the eternal generation of the Son of God; of whom it is there said, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting; though this has been, and still is, insisted on by great and good men, as a proof of it: but when he is said to go forth from the Father, it may seem, as it does to some, rather to intend his mission in time, or as coming into the world; not by change of place, but by assumption of nature, John xvi. 28. besides, the phrase is plural; goings forth; which seem to denote various acts; whereas that of begetting is a single act: to which may be added, that that is an act of the Father; these seem to be acts of the Son; and therefore may seem rather to be understood of his goings forth in the covenant, in acts of grace and love towards his people, and delight in them; in approaching to God in a covenant-way, and asking them of his Father, and all blessings of grace for them; in becoming their Surety, and engaging to be their Saviour and Redeemer. However, these words are a full proof of the eternal existence of Christ; or otherwise these things could not be predicated of him and his existence so early, under the relation and character of the Son of God, and that previous to his goings forth in a mediatorial way; as before proved. Yet, after all, I see not but that the divine generation of Christ may be included in those goings forth; and be the first and principal, and the foundation of the rest; since the contrast in the text is between the Deity and humanity of Christ; or, between his two births and sonships, divine and human; and the phrase of going forth, suits very well with the modern notion of generation, before observed; and the word יצא is frequently used of generation, Gen. xlvi. 26. Isai. xi. 1. and xlviii. 1, 19. and, indeed, in the very text itself. But,

The text in Psal. ii. 7. though some have parted with it, as a proof of this point, I choose to retain, *The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee*; which are the words of the Messiah, the Lord's anointed; against whom the kings of the earth set themselves, 2. the King set and anointed over the holy hill of Zion, 6. and who says in the beginning of this verse, *I will declare the decree*; which he speaks either as King, signifying that, he would, as such, declare and publish the laws, statutes, and judgments; so the word signifies; by which his subjects should be ruled and governed: or as a Prophet, who would declare the covenant, as the *Targum*, the covenant of grace, the things contained in it; and none so fit as he, who is the messenger of it: or the counsel and decree, as we render it, the scheme of man's redemption and salvation by himself; or the gospel, called the whole counsel of God, Acts xx. 27.

for this respects not what follows, the sonship of Christ; though that is the ground and foundation of the whole gospel-scheme; but that depends not on any decree, counsel, or will of God, but is of nature; and the mention of it is introduced, to shew the greatness and excellency of the Person spoken of in the context; and so to aggravate the wickedness of his enemies; since the King they opposed, is no other than the natural and proper Son of God; and in like manner are these words quoted in Heb. i. 5. to shew the pre-eminence of Christ to the angels: and as for the date, *this day*, it may well enough be thought to be expressive of eternity, since one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and as eternity itself; and which is expressed by days of eternity in Mic. v. 2. as the eternal God himself is called the Ancient of days, Dan. vii. 9. and, indeed, this passage is applicable to any day or time in which Christ is declared and manifested to be the Son of God; as at his incarnation, Heb. i. 6. 1 John iii. 8. and at his baptism and transfiguration, Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. as it is to the time of his resurrection; when he was declared to be the Son of God, Acts xiii. 25. Rom. i. 4. And agreeable to this sense of the words, as it respects his eternal generation, and his being the natural and proper Son of God, he is after treated as his heir, and bid to ask what he would for his inheritance, 8, 9. and is represented as the object of religious worship and adoration, and of trust and confidence, 12. which belong to none but a divine person. So Justin Martyr[p] interpret this passage of the manifestation of Christ's generation to men.

The text in Prov. viii. 22. though a glorious proof of Christ's eternal existence, yet I formerly thought not so clear an one of his eternal generation. But, upon a more close consideration of it, it appears to me a very clear one; as the phrases in this, and some following verses, being possessed, brought forth, and brought up, clearly shew; much darkness has been spread over it, by a wrong translation in the Greek version, which renders the words, the Lord created me, &c. and which has led into more erors than one. Arius from hence concluded, that Christ, as a divine person, was created by his Father in some instant in eternity, and that he was made by him, not of the same nature with him, but of a like nature to him; and is his first and most excellent creature, and whom he made use of in the creation of others: but if the Wisdom of God, the person here speaking, was created by God, then God must be without his Logos, word, and wisdom, until he was created; whereas, he was always with him; and besides, he is the Creator, and not a creature; for all things were made by him, John i. 1—3.

Some, of late, have put a new sense on these words, equally as absurd as the former, and interpret them, of the creation of the human soul of Christ in eternity; which, they say, was then made, and taken up into union with God. But to this sense it must be objected, 1. That the human soul of Christ is not a person, nor is even the whole human nature, which is called a thing, and not a person, Luke i. 35. it never subsisted of itself, but always in the Person of the Son of God; and there are wise reasons, in the oeconomy and scheme of man's salvation, that so it should be; whereas wisdom here speaking is all along in the context represented as a Person, *I Wisdom*, verse 12. *the Lord possessed me*, verse 22. *I was set up*, verse 23, &c. — 2. The human soul of Christ is only a part of the human nature; whereas Christ has assumed a whole human nature, a true body, and a reasonable soul; and both were necessary to become a sacrifice; as they have been, Isai. liii. 10. Heb. x. 10. According to this notion, Christ assumed the human nature by parts, and these as widely distant as eternity and time; one part assumed in eternity, another part in time; what a sad mangle is this of our Lord's human nature? is this to be made in all things like unto his brethren? of the two, it would be more agreeable that the whole human nature was assumed so early; but was that the case, it would not be the seed of the woman, nor the seed of Abraham, nor the son of David, nor the son of Mary; nor would Christ be a partaker of our flesh and blood; and it should be considered, whether this would have been of any avail to us.—3. But what of all things is most absurd, this human soul is said to be created in eternity, or before time; which is a contradiction in terms, time being nothing else but the measure of a creature's duration; as soon as a creature was, time was; time begins with that, let it be when it will; and therefore cannot be before time: suppose a creature to be made millions of ages before the common date of time, the creation of the world, time must be reckoned from the existence of that creature; but what is worst of all, is the fatal consequence of this to divine revelation; for if there was any thing created before time, or before the world was, whether an angel or a man, or a part of man, the human soul, or the whole human nature of Christ, our Bible must begin with a falshood; and then who will believe what is said in it afterwards? which asserts, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*; that is, in the beginning of time, or when time first began. And this is so agreeable to reason, that Plato[q] says, Time and Heaven were made together; and Timæus Locrus[r], God made the world with time; and Plato defines time thus[s], Time is the motion of the sun, and the measure of motion; which was as soon as a creature was made; the first things that God made were the heavens and the earth; and therefore if any thing was created before them, this must be an untruth. How careful should men be of venting their own whims and fancies, to the discredit of the Bible, and to the risk of the ruin of divine Revelation. Should it be said, Were not the angels created before? I answer, No[t]: surely no man, thinking soberly, will assert it: how can it be thought, that the angels of heaven, as they are called, should be made before there was a heaven for them to be in? Should the text in Job xxxviii. 7. be produced in proof of it, let it be observed, that it is far from being clear that angels are there meant, since they are never elsewhere compared to stars, nor called the sons of God; rather good men are there meant, to whom both epithets agree; but be it understood of angels or men, it is not to be connected with 6. nor respects the time of laying the foundation and corner-stone of the earth; but the phrase in 4. is to be repeated at the beginning, *Where wast thou when the morning-stars sang together*, &c. and so refers to some early time after the creation of the heavens and the earth; and to a meeting, whether of angels or men, in which the praises of God, on account of his works, were celebrated, before Job had a being. No, neither angels nor men, nor any other creature, were before time; this is peculiar to Jehovah; this is a claim he makes, and none else can put in for it; *Before the day was, I am he*, Isai. xliii. 13. that is, before there was a day, before time was, I existed, when none else did; none existed in and from eternity but Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; not an angel, nor an human soul: it is a notion of Origen, condemned by Jerom[u] as heretical, that the soul of the Saviour was, before he was born of Mary; and that this is that which, when he was in the form of God, he thought no robbery to be equal with God.

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[p] Dialog. cum. Trypho. p. 316.

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[q] In Timæo, p. 1052. [r] De Anima Mundi, p. 19. Ed. Gale. [s] Definitiones, p. 1387.
[t] Vid. Theodoret. in Gen. Qu. 3.

What has led men into this notion of the human nature of Christ, either in part, or in whole, being created before time, or in eternity, is another error, or mistake, as one error generally leads to another; and that is, that Christ could not take upon him, nor execute the office of Mediator, without it; whereas, it is most certain, that a divine Person can take upon him an office, and execute it, without assuming an inferior nature; as the holy Spirit of God has; he, in the covenant of Grace, took upon him the office of applying the grace and blessings of the covenant, the things of Christ in it, to the covenant-ones; in doing which he performs the part of a comforter to them, and a glorifier of Christ; and yet never assumed any inferior nature; and this without any degradation of his person: and it is easy to observe, among men, that when two powers are at variance, one, even superior to them both, will interpose as a Mediator, without at all lessening his dignity and character. Christ, as a divine person, could and did take upon him the office of Mediator, without assuming human nature; it was sufficient for his constitution as such, that he agreed to assume it in time, when it was necessary; and there are several parts of his mediatorial office, which he could and did execute in eternity without it; he could and did draw nigh to his divine Father, and treat with him about terms of peace and reconciliation for men; he could and did covenant with him on the behalf of his elect; which to do, no more required an human nature in him, than in the Father; he could and did become a Surety for them in the covenant, and receive promises and blessings for them; and agreed to do all for them that law and justice could require: and to make such terms, agreements, promises, &c. of what use and avail would an human soul, or the whole human nature, have been unto him? There are other parts of his office, indeed, which required the actual assumption of the human nature; and when it was proper for him to perform them, then, and not before, was it necessary for him to assume it; such as obedience to the law, shedding of blood, and suffering death, to make peace, reconciliation, and atonement for his people.

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[u] Apol. Adv. Ruffin. fol. 73. A. tom. 2.

Wherefore, if this translation of Prov. viii. 22. *He created me*, is to be retained, it is better to interpret it of the constitution of Christ in his office, as Mediator, as the word create is used in common language, of making a king, peer, judge, or one in any office: but this is rather meant in the following verse, *I was set up*, or *anointed*, invested with the office of Mediator; anointing being used at the investiture of kings, priests, and prophets, with their office, is put for the act of investiture itself; for Wisdom, or Christ, proceeds in this account of himself, in a very regular and orderly manner; he first gives an account of his eternal existence, as the Son of God, by divine generation; and then of constitution, as Mediator, in his office-capacity; this latter is expressed by his being set up, and the former by his being possessed or begotten; as the same Greek version renders this word in Zech. xiii. 5. and it may be rendered here, *the Lord begat me*, and so possessed him as his own Son, laid a claim to him, and enjoyed him as such; for this possession is not in right of creation in such sense as he is the possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. xiv. 19, 22. but in right of paternity, in which sense the word is used, Deut. xxxii. 6. as a father lays claim to, possesses and enjoys his own son, being begotten by him, or signifies possession by generation, Gen. iv. 1. the following phrase in the beginning of his way, should be rendered without the preposition in, which is not in the text; for Wisdom, or Christ, is not, in this clause, expressing the date of his being begotten, but describing him himself, who is the begotten of the Father; as the beginning of his way, of his way of grace; with whom God first begun, taking no one step without him, nor out of him; his purposes of grace being in him, the scheme of reconciliation formed in him, the covenant of grace made with him, and all grace given to the elect in him; in whom they were chosen: and all this before his works of old, the works of creation; of which Christ is the beginning; the first and co-efficient cause, Rev. iii. 14. and this sense of the words, as understood of the begetting of Christ, is confirmed by some other phrases after used, as of being brought forth, 24. as conceived, as the vulgate Latin version; or begotten, as the Targum and Syriac version; so the Greek version, of 25. is, he begat me; and the word is used of generation in Job xv. 7. Psal. li. 5. and is repeated, 25. partly to excite attention to it, as being of great moment and importance, and partly to observe the certainty of it; the eternal generation of Christ being an article of faith, most surely to be believed: Wisdom further says of himself; *Then was I by him, as one brought up with him*, 30. being begotten by him, and being brought forth, he was brought up with his Father, which expresses the most tender regard to him, and the utmost delight in him. The word אמון may be rendered, *carried in his bosom**, as a son by a nursing father, Numb. xi. 12. see John i. 18.

* Noldius, N°. 1884. Coccei Lexic. col. 43.

To these proofs might be added, all those scriptures which speak of Christ as the begotten, the only begotten of the Father; which have been referred to, John i. 14, 18. and iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9. which cannot be understood of him as a man, for as such he was not begotten, and so was without Father, the antitype of Melchizedec; and whose generation must be understood not of his nature; for his nature is the same with the nature of the Father and Spirit, and therefore if his was begotten, theirs would be also; but of his person; as in natural, so in divine generation, person begets person, and not essence begets essence; and this begetting is not out of, but in the divine essence; it being an immanent and internal act in God; and in our conception of it, as has been already observed, we are to remove every thing impure and imperfect, division and multiplication, priority and posteriority, dependence, and the like; and as for the modus, or manner of it, we must be contented to be ignorant of it, as we are of our own generation, natural and spiritual; and of the incarnation of Christ, and of the union of the human nature to his divine Person. If we must believe nothing but what we can comprehend, or account for the manner, or how it is, we must be obliged to disbelieve some of the perfections of God; as eternity, immensity, and omniscience, &c. yea, that there is a God, or that there are three distinct Persons in the Godhead; which, however, clearly revealed in scripture that they are, yet the manner, or how they are, how they subsist distinctly as three Persons, and yet but one God, is incomprehensible and inexplicable by us: and at this rate, there are many things in nature, and in philosophy [x], which must be given up, which yet are certain; since the matter how they be, cannot be explained; it is enough, that it is plain they are, though how cannot be said; as the union of our souls and bodies; and the influence that matter and spirit have on each other; and in the present case, it is enough that Christ is revealed as begotten of the Father; though the manner how he is begotten, cannot be explained: Athanasius [y] expresses the thing well; "How the Father begat the Son, I do not curiously enquire; and how he sent forth the Spirit, I do not likewise curiously enquire; but I believe that both the Son is begotten, and the Holy Spirit proceeds, in a manner unspeakable and impassible." And says [z] Gregory Nazianzen, "Let the generation of God be honoured in silence; it is a great thing, (abundantly so,) for thee to learn or know, that he is begotten; but how he is begotten, is not granted to thee to understand, nor, indeed to the angels." "It is enough for me, says the same ancient divine[a], that I hear of the Son; and that he is of the Father; and that the one is a Father, and the other a Son: and nothing besides this do I curiously enquire after.——Do you hear of the generation of the Son? do not curiously enquire the το πως, the how it is: Do you hear that the Spirit proceeds from the Father? do not curiously enquire το οπως, the manner how he does[b]; for if you curiously enquire into the generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit; I also, in my turn, will curiously enquire of thee, the temperament of soul and body; how thou art dust, and yet the image of God; what it is that moves thee, or what is moved; how it is the same that moves, and is moved; how the sense abides in one, and attracts that which is without; how the mind abides in thee, and begets a word in another mind; and how it imparts understanding by the word: and, not to speak of greater things, what the circumference of the heavens, what the motion of the stars, or their order or measure, or conjunction, or distance; what the borders of the sea; from whence the winds blow; or the revolutions of the seasons of the year, and the effusions of showers? If thou knowest not any of these things, O man —— of which sense is a witness, how canst thou think to know God accurately, how and what he is? this is very unreasonable." Nor should the phrase, eternal generation, be objected to, because not syllabically expressed in scripture; it is enough that the thing is which is meant by it: nor are the words, a Trinity of Persons, or three distinct Persons in God; nor the word satisfaction, expressive of a doctrine on which our salvation depends. It is most certain, that Christ is the Son of God; and it is as certain, that he is the begotten Son of God; and if begotten, then the word generation may be used of him, for what is begotten is generated; and since he is God's own Son, or his proper Son, he must be so by proper generation, and not by improper, or figurative generation, which must be the case if a Son by office; and if he is the Son of God by proper generation, he must be so either as man, or as a divine Person; not as man, for as such he was not begotten at all; but was made of a woman, and born of a virgin: it remains, that he must be so considered, as a divine Person; and since it was from everlasting, before the earth was, or any creature had a being, that he was begotten, and brought forth, and as early brought up, as a Son with his Father; with the utmost safety and propriety, may eternal generation be attributed to him; and, indeed, in no other sense can he be the Son of God.

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[x] A philosopher —— must not think he has a right to deny the action of powers, because he cannot comprehend the manner after which things thus happen; forasmuch as according to such notions, we might reject many things likewise, which experience proves really to come to pass; who can conceive the how of what has been shewn to happen about percussion, or about the operations of light in contempl. 24. How many effects are there in Chymistry, as likewise in Hydrostatics, of which we have not yet been able to comprehend the manner how they come to pass? no more than what has been said in contempl. 25. about the bodies and roots of plants, which perhaps would be as hardly admitted —— if nothing must be believed to be true, but that of which we can understand the how and the manner. Nieuwentyt's Religious Philosopher, vol. 3. contempl. 26. s. 5. p. 897.

[y] De S. Trinitate, Dialog. 1. p. 154.

[z] Orat. 35. p. 567.

To close all; this phrase, the Son of God, intends what is essential and natural to him; and suggests to us, that he is the true and natural Son of God; not a Son in an improper and figurative sense, or not by office, but by nature; that, as such, he is a divine Person, God, the true God, Heb. i. 8. 1 John v. 20. that he is equal with God, as the Jews understood him; in which they were not mistaken, since our Lord never went about to undeceive them, which he would have done, had they misunderstood him, John v. 17, 18. and x. 30. and it is to be observed, that he has been concluded to be the Son of God from his divine perfections and works; from his omniscience, John i. 48, 49. from his omnipotence, Matt. xiv. 33. and from the marvellous things that happened at his crucifixion, Matt. xxvii. 54. In short, as the phrase, the Son of man, denotes one that is truly man; so the phrase, the Son of God, must intend one that is truly God, a divine Person; and as Christ is called the Son of man, from the nature in which he is man; so he is called the Son of God, from the nature in which he is God. I have been the longer upon the Sonship of Christ, because it is that upon which the distinction in the Godhead depends; take that away, and it cannot be proved there is any distinction of persons in it. I proceed,

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[a] Orat. 29. p. 492, 493.

[b] Like advice is given by Cyril of Jerusalem, "that God has a Son believe, το δε πως, but how, or in what manner, do not curiously enquire, for seeking you will not find it." Catechis. xi. s. 7. p. 144.

To consider the third Person, and his personal relation; or distinctive relative property; which is, to be breathed, or to be the breath of God; which is never said of the Father and Son; and which, with propriety, gives him the name of Spirit or Breath, as he is called, Ezek. xxxvii. 9. I shall treat of this very briefly, since the scriptures speak sparingly of it. It should be observed, that though he is most frequently called the Holy Spirit, yet it is not his being of an holy nature, and of a spiritual substance, which distinguishes him from the Father and the Son; for since they are of the same nature, which is perfectly pure and holy, they must be equally holy, as he is: and since God, essentially considered, is a Spirit, or spiritual, such is God, personally considered; or such is each person in the Godhead. Nor does he take his name of Spirit, or Breath, from any actions of his, on, in, or with respect to creatures; as in breathing into Adam the breath of life, Gen. ii. 7. or in breathing the breath of spiritual life, in the regeneration and conversion of men, Ezek. xxxvii. 9. John iii. 8. nor from his inspiration of the scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 21. nor from the disciples receiving the Holy Ghost through Christ's breathing upon them, John xx. 22. Though all these are symbolical of, analogous to, and serve to illustrate his original character, and personal relation and distinction, which denominates him the breath of the Almighty, Job xxxiii. 4. and distinguishes him from Jehovah the Father, the breath of whose mouth he is called, Psal. xxxiii. 6. and from Christ the Son of God, the breath of whose mouth he is also said to be, 2 Thess. ii. 8. and the Spirit, or breath, of the Son, Gal. iv. 6, and as Jehovah the Father was never without his Word, the Son, so neither the Father, nor the Word, were ever without their Breath, or Spirit: Let none be offended, that the third Person is called Spirit or Breath, since this suggests not, a mere power, or quality, but designs a Person; so an human person is called, Lam. iv. 20. and here a divine Person; to whom personal acts, and these divine, are ascribed; such as the establishing of the heavens, the making of man, the enditing of the scriptures, and filling the apostles with extraordinary gifts, Psal. xxxiii. 6. Job xxxiii. 4. 2 Pet. i. 21. John xx. 22. whose distinct personality, and proper Deity, together with the personality and Deity of the Father and

Son, will be more particularly considered in the next chapters. I take no notice of the procession of the Spirit from Father and Son, which, though it illustrates his distinction from them, yet rather seems to be understood of his coming forth from them, not with respect to his Person, but his office, in a way of mission by them, to be the Convincer and Comforter of men, and the Applier of all grace unto them; see John xv. 26. and xvi. 7, 8.

OF THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, AND DEITY OF THE FATHER.

THOUGH what has been already observed, clearly shews there is a distinction of Persons in the Godhead, and wherein that distinction lies; yet other things may be added, which will serve to illustrate and confirm it; and which will be produced, not as making it, but as making it more clearly to appear. A person is by some[c] defined, "An individual that subsists, is living, intelligent, is not sustained by another, nor is a part of another;" and which is true of each of the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. I shall begin with the personality of the Father; the word Person is expressly used of him in Heb. i. 3. where Christ his Son, by whom he made the worlds, is called *the express image of his person:* the word *υποστασις*, here used, is translated *substance* in chap. xi. 1. and some would have it so rendered here; and some of the Latin writers did use the the word *substantia*, substance: but then they understood it, and made use of it, just in the same sense as we do the word person; but finding it to be an ambiguous word, and that it tended to lead men to imagine there were three distinct divine Beings, they left it off, and chose the word person, as less exceptionable; the Greek writers, and some even before the council of Nice, took the word here used, in the same sense as we do, for subsistance, or person[d]; and so it is here rendered by many learned men, as Valla, Vatablus, Erasmus, Calvin, Beza, Piscator, Pareus, and others; in which translation we may safely acquiesce.

The definition of a person agrees with the Father of Christ, as before observed. The Father of Christ is an individual, and so distinguishable from the divine nature he is possessed of, in common with the Son and Spirit; he subsists of himself, he does not owe his being to another, nor his he upheld in it by another; nor is he possessed only of a part, but of the whole Deity; he is the living Father, has life in himself, and not from another, John v. 26. and vi. 57. and is intelligent, knows himself, his Son and Spirit, and all things, Matt. xi. 27.

The personality of the Father may be included from those personal actions which are ascribed to him; for besides begetting the Son, which is what distinguishes him from the other two persons; there are other acts which illustrate and confirm the distinction made, though they do not make it; as, — 1. The creation of all things is ascribed to him; he is said, as the Father of Christ, to make the worlds by him his Son, and to create all things by him; not as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause, Heb. i. 2. Eph. iii. 9. — 2. The works of providence, as upholding and sustaining all creatures in their being, supplying them with all things necessary, governing the world, ordering and disposing of all persons and things in it, are attributed to him, in distinction from his Son, though in conjunction with him, *my Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, John v. 17. — 3. The mission of his Son into the world to be the Saviour of men, shews his distinct personality from him, which is often said of him; now he that sends, and he that is sent, cannot be the same person, but must be distinct; indeed the Spirit of God is said also to send Christ, as well as the Father, Isai. xlviii. 16. but then, though the Son is sent by both, and the Spirit is sent both by the Father and the Son, yet the Father is never said to be sent by either; he is always the sender, and never the sent. — 4. The several distinct acts of grace towards the elect in Christ, will serve to evince the distinct personality of the Father. Men are said to be elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, 1 Pet. i. 2. and are said to be chosen by him in Christ unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and therefore must be distinct from Christ, in whom, and to whose salvation they are chosen; and from the Spirit, through whose sanctification they are chosen to the obtaining of the glory of Christ, Eph. i. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. planning the scheme of man's salvation by Christ; reconciling, or forming the scheme of reconciliation in Christ; consulting in the council of peace with him about it, are personal acts, and distinguish him from Christ; making a covenant with his Son on account of elect men, putting their persons into his hands, blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him, and giving grace to them in him before the world was; as they are personal acts, so they shew him to be distinct from his Son, with whom he covenanted, and whom he entrusted with the said persons and things: his drawing them by the powerful influences of his grace in time, to come to Christ and believe in him, John vi. 44. promising and giving the Spirit as a convincer, comforter, enlightener, and strengthener, with many other things, serve to illustrate and confirm his distinct personality. Now we call the Father the first person, not that he is so in order of time or causality, and as if he was *fons Deitatis*, the fountain of Deity, as some good men have wrongly called him; for rather the Deity is the fountain of the divine persons, from whence they arise together, and in which they subsist, and in which they have no superiority and pre-eminence of one another; but as it is necessary to speak of them in some order, it seems most proper to place the Father first, whence we call him the first person, and then the Son, and then the Spirit; in which order they are usually put in scripture; though, to shew there is a perfect equality between them, this order is sometimes inverted.

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[c] Vid. Wendelin. Christ. Theolog. l. 1. c. 2. p. 93, 94.

[d] See my Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 93.

That the Father of Christ, as he is a person, so a divine person, will not be loubted; nor is his Deity called in question; and yet it may be proper to say omething of it, and establish it; which may be done, not only by observing hat he is expressly and distinctly called God, Rom. xv. 6. Gal. i. 1. Phil. ii. 11. but this may be proved,

1. From his divine perfections: God necessarily exists, owes his being to no ther, subsists of himself, and is independent of any: such is the Father of Christ, e has life in himself and of himself, and does not derive it from another, John . 26. God is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning and end; so s the Father of Christ, he is he *which is, and which was, and which is to come,* ev. i. 4. God is immense and omnipresent, cannot be circumscribed by space, e fills heaven and earth, and is contained in neither; such is the Father of hrist, of whom he often speaks as in heaven, and yet with him on earth, and vith all his people, at all times, and in all ages, John xiv. 23. and xvi. 32. od is omniscient, knows all persons and things; and so does the Father of hrist, he knows the Son in such sense as no other does, and knows that which either the angels nor the Son, as man, know, even the day and hour of judgnent, Matt. xi. 27. Mark xiii. 32. see Acts i. 7. 2 Cor. xi. 31. God is omipotent, he can do all things; and so can the Father of Christ, *Abba, Father,* ays Christ, *all things are possible unto thee,* Mark xiv. 36. see Matt. xvi. 53. ohn x. 29. Once more, God is immutable, not subject to any change and ariation; God, the Father of Christ, is the *Father of lights, with whom there s no variableness nor shadow of turning,* James i. 17. he is unchangeable in his urposes and promises made in Christ, and in his love which is in Christ Jesus e Lord. In short, there is no perfection in Deity but what God, the Father f Christ, is possessed of.

11. His Deity will appear from the works which are ascribed to him, and hich none but God could do; such as making the heaven, the earth and sea, nd all that in them are; and who as the maker of them is addressed by the apose, Acts iv. 24—27. and hence by Christ called *Father, Lord of heaven and arth,* Matt. xi. 25. and the works of providence, before observed, are ascribed o him, as supporting the world by his power, governing it by his wisdom, and upplying it by his goodness, which none but God can do; see Matt. vi. 26, 2. And his mighty acts of grace in quickening sinners dead in sins, in doing hich the same power is put forth as in raising Christ from the dead, Eph. ii. . and i. 19. and in forgiving the sins of men, which none but God can do, ark ii. 7. and for which Christ prayed to his Father on the behalf of his eneies, Luke xxiii. 34. to which may be added the resurrection of the dead, hich is purely a divine work, and requires almighty power. The resurrecion of Christ is most frequently ascribed to him, and he will raise the dead at he last day, 1 Cor. vi. 14. From these and from many other divine works, ay the Deity of the Father be concluded, as well as,

III. From the worship due to him, and given to him. None but God is and ought to be the object of religious worship and adoration; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Matt. iv. 10. now true worshippers of God *worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him*, John iv. 23. and the Father of Christ is frequently represented as the object of faith, hope and love; to whom prayer is to be made, and to whom prayer was made both by Christ and his apostles; how often are grace and peace wished for from him in the several epistles? and he stands first in the form of baptism, which is a solemn act of divine and religious worship.

OF THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, AND DEITY OF THE SON.

THAT the Son of God is a person, and a divine person distinct from the Father and the Spirit, cannot be doubted; for since his Father is a person, and he is the express image of his person, he must be a person too; and he must be the express image of him, as he himself is a divine person, the Son of God, and truly God; and not as he is man and mediator; not as he is man, or as having an human nature, for his Father never had any, and therefore he could not be the image of him in that respect; for though man is the image of God as to some qualities in him, yet is he never called his character or express image, much less the express image of any of the persons in the Deity: nor as mediator, and in an office-capacity, for his Father was never a mediator, nor in an office: it remains therefore that it must be the express image of his person, as he himself is a divine person, abstracted from any consideration of his human nature and of his office. For as Plato[e] says, that which is like must needs be of the same species with that to which it is like. The definition of a Person agrees with him: he is an individual, distinct, though not separate from the divine nature, he has in common with the Father and the Spirit; he subsists of himself in that nature distinctly, and independently; is not a part of another, the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells in him; nor is his human nature, which he assumed in time, a part of his person, nor adds any thing to his personality; but being taken up into union with his person, subsists in it; he has life in himself, and is the living God; is intelligent, has understanding and will; knows himself, his Father and the Spirit, and all creatures and things, and does whatsoever he pleases.

Besides the distinctive, relative property, or personal relation of the Son, which is to be begotten, and which gives and makes the distinction of him, as a divine person, from the Father and Spirit, who are never said to be begotten; there are many other things which shew, or make him appear to be a distinct person.

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[e] Parmenide, p. 1119.

I. His being with God as the Word[f], John i. 1. and with his Father as a Son, as one brought up with him, Pov. viii. 30. clearly expresses his distinct personality; he must be a person to be with, and to be brought up with another; and he must be distinct from him with whom he is; he cannot with any propriety be said to be with himself, or to be brought up with himself.

II. His being set up from everlasting as mediator, and the covenant head of the elect; the Father making a covenant with him, and putting the persons of the chosen ones, with all the blessings of grace for them, into his hands, shew him to be a person; a mere name and character could not be said to be set up, to be covenant with, or to have persons and things committed to his care and charge; and these shew him to be a distinct person from him who set him up, and entrusted him with all these persons and things; see Prov. viii. 23. Psalm lxxxix. 3, 28. Deut. xxxiii. 3. Eph. i. 3. 2. Tim. i. 9.

III. His being sent in the fulness of time to be the Saviour of his people, and that under the character of the Son of God, shews him to be distinct from the Father, whose Son he is, and by whom he was sent; if he was not a person, but a mere name, he could not be sent; and he must be distinct from him that sent him; he that sends, and he that is sent, cannot be one and the same person; or else it must be said, that he sent himself, which is too gross and absurd to be admitted; see Rom. viii. 3. Gal iv. 4. 1 John iv. 9, 14.

IV. His becoming a sacrifice, and making satisfaction for the sins of men, and so the Redeemer and Saviour of them, plainly declare his distinct personality. Was he not a person he could not offer himself a sacrifice, and he must be distinct from him to whom he offered himself; was he not a person he could not make satisfaction, or reconcile men to God; or in other words, make reconciliation and atonement for sin; these are personal acts, and he must be distinct from him to whom the satisfaction, reconciliation and atonement are made; or to whom men are reconciled by him; if he has redeemed men to God by his blood, as he has, he must be a person that is the redeemer of men, and he must be distinct from him to whom he has redeemed them; for he cannot with propriety be said to reconcile and redeem them to himself; see Eph. v. 2. Heb. ix. 14. Rom. v. 10, 11. Rev. v. 9.

V. His ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, shew him to be a person that ascended, and is sat down; and though it was in human nature that ascended and sat down, yet it was God in that nature; *God is gone up with a shout*, Psal. xlvii. 5. *Thou*, the Lord God, *hast ascended on high* Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. *The Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand*, Psal. cx. 1. and he must be distinct from his God and our God, from his Father and our Father, to whom he ascended, and cannot be the same person with him at whose right hand he sits, John xx. 17. Heb. i. 13.

VI. His advocacy and intercession with his Father, as a plain proof of his distinct personality. He is said to be an *advocate with the Father*, 1 John ii. 1. and therefore must be a person to act the part of an advocate; and must be distinct from him with whom he advocates; unless it can be thought he is an advocate with himself; he himself says, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter*, meaning the Spirit of truth, as next explained, John xiv. 16, 17. Now he must be distinct from the Father to whom he prays, for surely he cannot be supposed to pray to himself; and he must be distinct from the Spirit, for whom he prays. He appears in the presence of God for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them, and must be a person to do this; and must be distinct from him in whose presence he appears, and to whom he makes intercession; for he cannot with any propriety be said to appear in his own presence for his people, and to mediate and make intercession for them with himself; see Heb. vii. 25. and ix. 24.

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[f] Of this name of the Son of God, the Word, see my Doctrine of the Trinity, ch. 5. p. 98—120.

VII. His judging the world at the last day, with all the circumstances thereof; gathering all nations before him, dividing them, and setting them, some on his right hand and others on his left, and passing the definitive sentence on them, prove him to be a person, a divine person, and distinct from the Father and the Spirit; for as for *the Father*, he *judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22. nor is ever the final judgment of the world ascribed to the Spirit; see Matt. xxv. 31—41. Acts x. 42. and xvii. 31.

VIII. It is promised to the saints that they shall be with Christ, where he is; see him as he is, and behold his glory, and shall reign with him for evermore; and he is represented as the object of their praise, wonder and wroship, to all eternity; and that as distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost; all which, and much more, shew him to be a person, and to be distinct from them both; for surely he must be a person, a divine and distinct one, whom the saints shall be, live and dwell with to all eternity; and whom they shall praise, serve and adore, throughout endless ages.

The Deity of Christ may be next considered, and proved; or, that he is a divine person, truly and properly God. Not a made or created God, as say the Arians. He was made flesh, and made of a woman; but not made God; for then he must make himself, which is absurd; since *without him was not any thing made that was made*; but *all things were made by him*, John i. 3. Nor God by office, as say the Socinians; for then he would be God only in an improper sense; as magistrates are called gods; and not truly and properly God; nor God by name only; as there are called lords many, and gods many; such were the gods of the heathens, inanimate, irrational, lifeless beings, and so could have no divinity in them. But he is God by nature; as these were not; having the whole essence and nature of God in him. This will appear,

1. From the names which are given to him; he has the same glorious names the most high God has; as *Ehjeh, I AM that I AM*, Exod. iii. 14. to which our Lord refers, and takes to himself, John viii. 58. and Jehovah, which is incommunicable to a creature, and peculiar to the most High, Psal. lxxxiii. 18. it

is not given to angels; for wherever an angel is so called, not a created but the uncreated angel is meant; nor to the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 2. for not the ark, but God, whose the ark was, is there called by the name of the Lord of hosts: nor to Jerusalem, Jer. xxxiii. 16. but to the Messiah, chap. xxiii. 6. for the words may be rendered, " This is the name wherewith he shall be called by her, The Lord our Righteousness:" nor to the church absolutely, Ezek. xlviii. 35. but in composition, or with addition; and is only symbolical of Jehovah's presence being with her; and the same may be said of mount Moriah; and of some altars, called, Jehovah-Jireh, Jehovah-Nissi, and Jehovah-Shallom; which are only symbolical, and designed to call in remembrance the wonderful appearance of Jehovah; the gracious help, and divine assistance, he granted to his people in those places, Gen. xxii. 14. Exod. xvii. 15. Judg. vi. 24. nor is this name given to priests and judges, Deut. xix. 17. for Jehovah is not to be explained by them; but is distinguished from them; and though he is joined with them, this only designs his presence in judiciary affairs, agreeable to Psal. lxxxii. 1. if, therefore, it can be proved that the name Jehovah is given to Christ, it will prove him to be the most High over all the earth.

Now we are told that God spake to Moses, and said, *I am the Lord* or *Jehovah*; by which name he was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that is, not by that only, or that was not so fully made known to them, as it had been to Moses, and to the Israelites by him, Exod. vi. 2, 3. and iii. 14. which person that appeared to Moses, and said those words, is called the Angel of the Lord, chap. iii. 2. not a created angel, 6. but an uncreated one; and must be understood, not of God the Father, who is never called an angel; but of the Son of God, the Angel of his presence, who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, went before them, and led them through the Red sea, and wilderness, to the land of Canaan, Exod. iii. 8. and xiii. 21. and xiv. 19. and xxiii. 20. Isai. lxiii. 9. he, whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness, is expressly called Jehovah, Exod. xvii. 7. and nothing is more evident than that this Person was Christ, 1 Cor. x. 9. he whom Isaiah saw on a throne, making a very magnificent appearance, is not only called Adonai, Isai. vi. 1. but by the seraphim, Jehovah, 3. and so by Isaiah, 5. who was bid to say to the Jews, 8, 9. *Hear ye indeed*, &c. which words Christ applies to himself; and observes that, *those things Esaias said, when he saw his glory, and spoke of him*, John xii. 39—41. There is a prophecy in Isai. xl. 3. *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord*, or of *Jehovah*, *make straight in the desart, an high way for our God*, which by the evangelist Matthew, is applied unto, and interpreted of John the Baptist, Matt. iii. 1—3. wherefore, the Jehovah, whose way he was to prepare, and our God, whose paths he was to make straight, could be no other than Christ; whose harbinger and forerunner John was, and whose way and paths were prepared and made straight by him, through his preaching the doctrine of repentance, administering the ordinance of baptsim, and declaring the kingdom of heaven, or of the Messiah, was at hand. Moreover, the

Messiah, or Christ, is expressly called, The Lord, or Jehovah, our righteousness, in Jer. xxiii. 6. it being his work, as Mediator, to bring in everlasting righteousness; and is the end of the law for it, and is made righteousness to every one that believes. Once more, Jehovah promises to pour forth the Spirit of grace and supplication on some persons described in Zech. xii. 10. and then adds, *They shall look upon me*, Jehovah, *whom they have pierced*; which was fulfilled in Christ, when one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, John xix. 34, 37. the same words are referred to, and applied to Christ, Rev. i. 7. Now, since in these, and in many other places, Christ is intended by Jehovah, he must be truly and properly God, since this name is incommunicable to any other.

It may be observed also, that in some places of scripture, Christ is absolutely called God; as in Psal. xlv. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*; where he is distinguished from God his Father, 7. and the words are expressly applied to him as the Son of God, Heb. i. 8. *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God*, &c. yet, Christ calls himself God; as he well might, since he is in the form of God, and therefore thought it no robbery to be equal to him; saying, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth*; *for I am God, and there is none else*; *I have sworn by myself*, &c. Isai. xlv. 22, 23. which last words, in connection with the other, are, by the apostle Paul, applied to Christ, Rom. xiv. 10—12. The evangelist John says of the Word, or Son of God, who was made flesh, and dwelt among men, and so cannot be understood of any but Christ, that *the Word was God*, John i. 14. and the same inspired writer observes, *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us*, 1 John iii. 16. from whence it follows, that he that laid down his life for men, which can only be said of Christ, and wherein his love to them appeared, must be God.

And Christ is not only called God absolutely, but with some additional epithets; with possessive pronouns, as, our God, the Jews were waiting for, and John was the forerunner of, Isai. xxv. 9. and xl. 3. your God, who should come when miracles would be wrought as proofs of it, Isai. xxxv. 4, 5. their God, Luke i. 16. my Lord and my God, by Thomas, John xx. 28. Now though angels, magistrates, and judges, are called gods in an improper and metaphorical sense yet never called our gods, your gods, &c. Christ is said to be Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, that is, God manifest in the flesh, Matt. i. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Some additional characters are given of Christ, when he is called God; which shew him to be truly and properly God; as, *the mighty God*, in Isai. ix. 6. which is manifestly a prophecy of him; and who elsewhere is called the most Mighty, yea, the Almighty, Psal. xlv. 3. Rev. i. 8. and *over all God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. over all creatures, angels and men, who are made by him; and he is blessed for ever in himself. He is called the great God whose glorious appearing, and not the Father's, saints are directed to look for; besides, this great God, is explained of Jesus Christ our Saviour in the next chuse, Tit. ii. 13. compare with this Rev. xix. 17. where he who is called the great God, is the mighty warrior, whose name is the Word of God, and King of kings, and Lord of lords, verse 11, 13, 16. Christ is also said to be the *living God*, Heb. iii. 12. for he only is spoken of in the context; and this is only said of the most high God; which distinguishes him from all other deities, Jer. x. 10. and, to add no more, he is called the true God, in opposition, to all false and fictitious deities, 1 John v. 20. for what is there said, is said expressly of the Son of God.

II. The Deity of Christ may be proved from the divine perfections he is possessed of; *for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead*, Col. ii. 9. not one perfection of the divine nature excepted; or otherwise it could not be said, that all the fulness of Deity was in him. God is necessarily and self-existent, and independent on any; such is Christ, he is *αυτοθεος*, God of himself: as man and mediator he has a life given him for himself, and others, and lives by the Father; but, as God, he owes his life and being to none; it is not derived from another; he is over all, God blessed for ever. Eternity is a perfection of God; God is from everlasting to everlasting; Christ was not only before Abraham, but before Adam; and before any creature was in being; for he is the *αρχη*, the beginning, the first Cause of the creation of God, Rev. iii. 14. the first born, or rather, the first parent and producer of every creature; as the word *πρωτοτοκος*, by the removal of the accent, may be rendered[g]; which best agrees with the apostle's reasoning in the next verse; where all things are said to be created by him; and therefore, as the apostle argues, he must be before all things, Col. i. 15—17. as Mediator, he was set up from everlasting; his goings forth in the covenant were of old; the elect were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and had grace given them in him, before that began; all which suppose his eternal existence. Hence he is called Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; which is, and was, and is to come; Melchizedec's antitype, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, Rev. i. 8. Heb. vii. 3. Omnipresence, or immensity, is another perfection of Deity, Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. Christ, as the Son of God, was in heaven, in the bosom of his Father; when, as the Son of man, he was here on earth, John i. 18. and iii. 13. which he could not be, if he was not omnipresent; nor could he make good his promises to his ministers, churches, and people, to be with them at all times, in all ages, and in all places, wherever they are, Matt. xviii. 20. and xxviii. 20. nor walk in the midst of his golden candlesticks, the several churches in different places; and fill all things and persons in them, as he certainly does, Rev. i. 13. Eph. iv. 10. Omniscience is another divine perfection, and most manifestly appears in Christ; he knew what was in man, and needed not that any should testify to him what was in man; he could tell the woman of Samaria all that ever she did; he knew from the beginning who would believe in him, and who would betray him; he knew the secret thoughts of the Scribes and Pharisees; and is that Word that is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and he will hereafter let all the world and churches know, that he searches the hearts and reins. In short, he knows all things, as Peter affirmed unto him, John ii. 24, 25. and iv. 29. and vi. 64. Matt. ix. 4. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. ii. 23. John xxi. 17. and though he is said not to know the day of judgment, this is said of him as the Son of man, not as the Son of God, Mark xiii. 32. Omnipotence is a perfection that belongs to Christ, and is peculiar to God, who only can do all things; Christ is Almighty, and his works declare it; the creation of all things, the sustentation of the universe, the redemption and preservation of his people, and the resurrection of them at the last day; all which are, *according to his mighty power, which is able to subdue all things to himself*, Phil. iii. 21. To observe no more, immutability belongs solely to God; who is without any variableness or shadow of turning; and such is Christ, the same to-day yesterday, and for ever, Heb. xiii. 8. see Psal. cii. 26. compared with Heb. i. 12. and since therefore such perfections of the Godhead are in Christ, he must be truly and properly God.

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[g] Vid. Isidor. Pelusiot. Epist. l. 3. ep. 31.

III. The truth of Christ's proper divinity may be proved from the works done by him; which are the same that are done by the Father; and in which he is a co-efficient cause with him; and are done by him *ομοιως*, in like manner as by the Father, John v. 17, 19. such as the creation of all things out of nothing; of the whole world, and all things in it, visible or invisible, John i. 2, 3. Col. i. 16. the making of the worlds, the heaven and the earth, are particularly ascribed to the Word and Son of God; and he that built all things is God, Heb. xi. 3. and i. 10. and iii. 4. the work of providence, the government of the world, and the disposing of all things in it, Christ is jointly concerned in with the Father; *My father worketh hitherto, and I work*, that is, with him, John v. 17. Christ upholds all things by his power; bears up the pillars of the earth; and by him do all things consist, Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 17. the miracles Christ wrought on earth in human nature, as they were proofs of his Messiahship, so of his Deity; such as curing the lame, the blind, and dumb, and deaf, and even raising the dead, by a word speaking; which were what none but God could do: these prove that the Father was in him, and he in the Father, Matt xi. 4, 5. John x. 37, 38. If he was not the mighty God, he could never have been able to have wrought and obtained the redemption and salvation of his people, by his own arm: what gave virtue and efficacy to his blood, to purchase his church and people, and cleanse them from their sins, is his Deity; and so to his righteousness, to make it a justifying one before God; and to his sacrifice, to make it expiatory of sin, and acceptable to God. The acts of forgiveness of sin, and justification from it, are peculiar to God. None can forgive sin but God; yet Christ has done it, and therefore must be God, Mark ii. 7—10. it is God that justifies men from sin, and acquits them from condemnation, Rom. viii. 1, 33. and so does Christ, Isai. liii. 11. The Resurrection of the dead is a work of almighty power, and which none but God can do; and yet Christ has raised himself from the dead, and thereby is declared to be the Son of God with power; that is, truly and properly God, Rom. i. 4. see John ii. 19. and x. 18. and he will raise all the dead at the last day, by his mighty power; and at his all-commanding voice, the dead will come forth out of their graves, wherein they have lain, John v. 28, 29. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. The judgment of the world is committed to him; *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22. Now if he was not God omnipotent and omniscient, he would never be able to do what he will do; gather all nations before him, separate them, and place them some on his right hand, and some on his left; bring to light the counsels of the heart, and judge the secrets of it, and to give to every man for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil; pronounce the several decisive sentences, and put them in execution, Matt. xxv. 31—46, Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10.

IV. As a further proof of the Deity of Christ, the worship given him both by angels and men may be observed; for when he, God's first born, was brought into the world, he said, *Let all the angels of God worship him*, Heb. i. 6. which order to the celestial inhabitants, would never have been given, if he was not God: it is also the declared will of the divine Father of Christ, *that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*; that is, worship him with the same divine worship; which he would never have declared, who will not give his glory to another besides himself, was not Christ his Son the one God with him; see Psal. ii. 12. Men are directed to exercise faith and hope on him; yea, Christ himself directs unto it, equally to be exercised on him, as on his Father; which he would never have done, but that he and his Father are one, one in nature, and so in power and glory, John xiv. 1. and x. 30. yea, if he was not God, but a mere man, instead of men being blessed and happy, who make him their hope, and trust in him, they would be cursed for so doing, Jer. xvii. 5, 7. Baptism, a solemn ordinance of religious worship, is ordered to be administered in his name, equally as in the name of the Father, Matt. xxviii. 19. which, if a mere creature, would be idolatry and blasphemy; for which reason the apostle Paul was so cautious, lest any should think they were baptized by him in his own name, 1 Cor. i. 13—15. Prayer, another branch of religious worship, is often made to Christ; and that not by a single person only as by Stephen, in his last moments, Acts vii. 58. but by whole churches and communities; who are said in every place to call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; and how often are grace and peace wished for, by the apostles, as from God our Father, so from the Lord Jesus Christ? 1 Cor. i. 2, 3. all which would never be performed by saints, nor be admitted of by God, was not Christ truly and properly God; nor need we scruple to worship him, nor be fearful lest we should give him too much: and great encouragement we have to commit our souls, and the salvation of them into his hands, and trust him with our all; since he is God the only Saviour.

OF THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WHAT only remains now to be considered, under the article of the Trinity, are the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost; to prove that he is a Person, a distinct Person, from the Father and Son; and a divine Person, or truly and properly God.

I. That he is a Person, and not a mere name and character, power or attribute of God; which will appear by observing,

1 That the description of a Person agrees with him; that it subsists and lives of itself, is endowed with will and understanding, or is a willing and intelligent agent. Such is the Spirit of God; as the Father has life in himself, and the Son has life in himself, so as the holy Spirit; since he is the author of natural and spiritual life in men; which he preserves unto eternal life; and therefore called, the Spirit of life; which he could not be, unless he had life in himself; and if he has life in himself, he must subsist of himself: he has a power of willing whatever he pleases: the apostle, speaking of his influences, administrations, and operations, says, *All these worketh the one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will,* 1 Cor. xii. 11. and that he is an intelligent agent, is clear from his knowing the things of God; which none can know but him; and from his teaching men all things, and guiding them into all truth, and giving the spirit of wisdom and knowledge to one and another; now "he that teacheth men knowledge, shall not he know?" 1 Cor. ii. 11. and xii. 8. John xiv. 26. and xvi. 13. Psal. xciv. 10.

II. Personal actions are ascribed unto him; he is said to be a reprover and convincer of men; to reprove or convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, John xvi. 8. Now he that convinces another of his mistakes, brings him to a sense and acknowledgment of them, and to repentance for them, must be a Person, and not a mere name and character. He is spoken of as a teacher, that teaches all things, all doctrines necessary to salvation, and all the duties of religion: an human teacher is a person, and much more a divine one, John xiv. 26. 1 John ii. 27. he is promised as a Comforter, John xvi. 7. and which he answers to, by shedding abroad the love of God in the hearts of the Lord's people; by taking the things of Christ, and shewing them to them; by applying to them exceeding great and precious promises; by declaring to them the pardon of their sins; by pronouncing the sentence of justification in their consciences; and by being the earnest and seal of their future happiness; all which are personal actions: he is one of the three witnesses in heaven, 1 John v. 7. who particularly testifies of Christ, of his Deity, sonship, offices, and grace, John xv. 26. and bears witness to the spirits of saints, that they are the children of God, Rom. viii. 16. which a mere name and character could not do; but a person. He is represented not only as a Spirit of grace and supplication, and an helper of the infirmities of the saints in prayer, but as making intercession for them, according to the will of God, Zech. xii. 10. Rom. viii. 26, 27. Now as the advocacy and intercession of Christ, prove him to be a Person, and a distinct one from the Father, with whom he intercedes; so the intercession of the Spirit, equally proves his personality, even his distinct personality also: to which may be added, that the Spirit is the giver of gifts to men, whereby they are qualified for the work of the ministry, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 11. and he calls them to that work, and appoints and sets them as overseers of particular churches, to feed them with knowledge and understanding, Acts xiii. 2. and xx. 28. and, to observe no more, he is often described as an inhabitant in the saints, that dwells in their bodies, and in their souls, and will always abide in them, until he has wrought them up for that self-same thing, eternal glory and happiness; now to dwell with any person, or in any place, is a personal action, and describes a person, John xiv. 16, 17. 1 Cor. iii. 16. and vi. 19. Rom. viii. 9, 11.

III. Personal affections are ascribed to the Spirit; as love, grief, &c. we read of the love of the Spirit, as well as of the Father, and of the Son; and which appears in the regeneration and sanctification of men, and in the application of grace unto them, Rom. xv. 30. and of the Spirit's being grieved with the sins of God's people, and their unbecoming carriage towards God and one another, Eph. iv. 30. and of his being rebelled against, vexed, and provoked; as he was by the Israelites, Isai. lxiii. 10. All which could not be said of him, was he not a Person. He is, moreover, said to be lied unto; as by Ananias and Sapphira, Acts v. 3. and to be blasphemed, and sinned against with an unpardonable sin, Matt. xii. 32, 33. which could never be, nor with propriety be said, was he not a Person, and a divine Person too.

II. The Holy Spirit is not only a Person, but a distinct Person from the Father and the Son; and besides his distinctive relative property, spiration, or being the breath of them both, and so distinct from each; the following things may be observed;

1. His procession from the Father and the Son: of his procession from the Father express mention is made in John xv. 26. and therefore must be distinct from the Father, from whom he proceeds; which, whether it respects his nature or his office, proves the same: it was once a warm controversy between the Greek and Latin churches, whether the Spirit proceeded from the Son or from the Father; which was denied by the former, and asserted by the latter; and which seems rightest; since he is called the Spirit of the Son, Gal. iv. 6. however, since he is the Spirit of the Son, he must be distinct from him whose Spirit he is.

II. The mission of the Holy Spirit, by the Father and the Son, clearly evinces his distinct personality from them; of his being sent by the Father, see John xiv. 16, 26. and of his being sent by the Son, see John xv. 26. and xvi. 7. Now as a mere name and character, quality, power, and attribute, could not be said to be sent, but a person; so the Spirit that is sent, must be a distinct Person from the Father and Son, said to send him,

III. The holy Spirit is called another Comforter, John xiv. 16. the Father of Christ is one; he is the God of all comfort; that comforts his people in all their tribulations, 2 Cor. i. 3, 4. and Jesus Christ is also a Comforter; one of his names with the Jews is *Menachem*, a Comforter[h]; a name well known with the Jews: hence good old Simeon is said to be waiting for the *Consolation of Israel*, Luke ii. 25. that is for the Messiah; whom the Jews expected as a Comforter: and how the Holy Ghost is another Comforter, distinct from both; from the Son, who prayed for him as such; and from the Father, prayed unto on that account.

IV. The holy Spirit is represented as doing some things distinct from the Father and the Son; particularly, as directing into the love of God, that is, the Father; and into a patient waiting for Christ; and so is distinguished from them both, 2 Thess. iii. 5. and also as taking of the things of Christ, called likewise the things of the Father, and shewing them to them that are Christ's; in which also he is distinguished from the Father, and from Christ, whose things he takes and shews, John xvi. 14, 15. So regeneration, renovation, sanctification and conversion, are distinct things, and very peculiar to the Spirit.

V. There are some distinct appearances of the Spirit, which shew his distinct personality; as at the baptism of Christ, when he descended as a dove and lighted on him; and thereby was distinguished from the Father, whose voice was heard from heaven; and from the Son, who was baptized in Jordan, and on whom the Spirit lighted, Matt. iii. 16, 17. and on the day of Pentecost the Spirit descended on the apostles, in the form of cloven tongues, as of fire; and with respect to this the apostle Peter says, that Christ *being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear*; meaning the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and his extraordinary gifts; and who is plainly distinguished from the Father, who made promise of him, and from the Son, who received this promise, and shed his gifts in the manner he did.

VI. The holy Spirit is represented as a distinct person in the ordinance of baptism; and the form of it being to be administered in his name, as distinct from the name of the Father and of the Son, in whose name also it was to be administered, Matt. xxviii. 19. and so he is mentioned as a distinct witness from the Father and the Word, in the record bore in heaven; for if he is not a distinct person from them, there could not be three testifiers, or three that bore record in heaven, 1 John v. 7.

III. The Holy Ghost is not only a person, and a distinct person from the Father and Son, but a divine person, or truly and properly God; which was denied by the Macedonians of old[i], and by the Socinians of late[k]; and geneally by all that oppose the divinity of Christ; but the Deity of the Spirit is to e proved by the same mediums and arguments which are to be fetched from the ame sources as the Deity of the Son.

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[h] Talmud Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

[i] Vid. Aug. de Haeres. c. 52. & Danaeum in ibid.

[k] Catechea. Racov. c. 1. p. 35. & c. 6. p. 214.

1. From the names which are given unto him; as particularly the name Jeho-ah, peculiar to the most High; it was Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel, that pake by the mouth of all the holy prophets from the beginning of the world; nd it is certain that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, Luke 68, 70. 2 Pet. i. 21. it was Jehovah, the Rock and God of Israel, that spake y David; and it is clear that it was the Holy Ghost that spake by him; for o Peter says, *This scripture must needs be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by he mouth of David, spoke before concerning Judas*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. Acts i. 16. was Jehovah, the Lord God, whom the Israelites tempted, proved and pro-oked in the wilderness; and this the Holy Ghost speaks of as done to him-elf; *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear is voice, harden not our hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when our fathers tempted me, proved me*, me, the Holy Ghost, Psal. xcv. 6, 7. Heb. ii. 7—9. see Isai. lxiii. 10. it was Jehovah that said to Isaiah, *Go and tell this eople, hear ye indeed, &c.* and according to the apostle Paul, the same was the Holy Ghost; for to the Jews he says, *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the rophet, saying, Go unto this people, and say, hearing ye shall hear, &c.* Isai. vi. 8, 9. Acts. xxviii. 25, 26. The Greek word *κυριος*, used in the New Testament, nswers to Jehovah and Adonai in the Old; and this is said of the holy Spi-it, he is that Spirit which is the Lord, and is called the Lord the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. see also 2 Thess. iii. 5. Moreover the Holy Spirit is very lainly called God in scripture: when Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost, he is aid to lie not unto men but unto God; wherefore if lying to the Holy Ghost s lying to God, it follows that the Holy Ghost must be God, Acts v. 3, 4. The saints of God are called the temple of God, and the reason proving it is, because the Spirit of God dwells in them, and because their bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are exhorted to glorify God in their bodies: now if the Holy Ghost is not called God, or meant by God in these passages, there is no force of reasoning in them, 1 Cor. iii. 16. and vi. 19, 20. Moreover the Apostle gives to the Holy Ghost the divine names of Spirit, Lord and God, when he is speaking of the diversities of his gifts, administrations and operations; for of him only is he speaking, by whom all these are, 1 Cor. xii. 4—6.

II. The Deity of the Spirit may be proved from the perfections of God, which are manifestly in him, as eternity; hence, as some think, he is called the eternal Spirit, Heb. ix. 14. however he was present at the creation of the heavens and the earth, and was concerned therein, Gen. i. 2. Job xxvi. 13. and therefore must be before any creature was, before time was, and so from eternity; as God the Father never was without his Son, so never without his Spirit; when it is said in some places that the Spirit was not yet, and that there were some that had not heard that there was any Holy Ghost: this is to be understood of the wonderful effusion of the gifts of the holy Spirit on the apostles at Pentecost, which was not to be until after the glorification of Christ; and of which dispensation the disciples at Ephesus had not then heard, John vii. 39. Acts xix. 2. Omnipresence, or immensity, another divine perfection; is ascribed to the Spirit; says David, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? and whither shall I flee from thy presence?* Psal. cxxxix. 7. he is not to be shunned and avoided; there is no going any where from him, for he is every where, otherwise he might be avoided; and if every where he must be the omnipresent of God: the saints are his temples in which he dwells, and he dwells in them all, at all times, in all places; which he could not do if he was not immense and omnipresent; Omniscience is another divine perfection to be observed in the Spirit of God; he knows all things, even the deep things of God, the thoughts, counsels and purposes of his heart; which he could not know, if he was not the omniscient God, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. nor could he teach the saints all things, nor guide them into all truth, and much less shew things to come, John xiv. 26. and xvi. 13, as he did under the Old Testament, when he testified beforehand by the prophet, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, 1 Pet. i. 11. and under the New Testament, witnessing to the apostle Paul that bonds and afflictions should abide him in every city, which he found to be true; and foretelling, by Agabus, that there would be a great dearth throughout the world, which came to pass in the times of *Claudius Cæsar*, Acts xx. 23. and xi. 28. Omnipotence is predicated of him; he is called the power of the Highest, and the finger of God; his concern in creation, and in the formation of the human nature of Christ, the miraculous signs and wonders wrought by his power, the gifts that he bestows, and the grace that he works in the hearts of men, loudly proclaim his omnipotence; and if such perfections, which are peculiar to Deity, are to be found in him, he must be truly and properly God.

III. The works which are ascribed unto him are a clear and full proof of his divinity: creation, a work of divine power, is attributed to him; he not only moved upon the face of the waters that covered the earth, at the first creation, and brought the rude and unformed chaos into a beautiful order, and garnished the heavens, and bespangled them with the luminaries and stars of light; but by him, the Breath, or Spirit of the Lord, the heavens and the host thereof were made and established, Gen. i. 2. Job xxvi. 13. Psal. xxxiii. 6. yea man, the most excellent and curious part of the creation, is made by him, as Elihu owns, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, Job xxxiii. 4. The work of providence he is jointly concerned in with the Father and the Son; *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? with whom took he counsel* (the Spirit of the Lord) *and taught him in the path of judgment? and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?* Isai. xl. 13, 14. that is, how to govern the world, and manage and direct all affairs in it. The enditing of the scripture is of him; *All scripture is given by inspiration of God*; by the Breath or Sipirt of

God, 2 Tim iii. 16. this is a work purely divine, and is of the Spirit; "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. 1. 21. It was the holy Spirit that formed the human nature of Christ; what was conceived in the virgin was of the Holy Ghost: that was fearfully and wonderfully made by him, and curiously wrought by him, in the lowest parts of the earth, Matt. i. 20. Psal. cxxxix. 14, 15. and was richly anointed by him with his gifts and graces; even above his fellows, and without measure, Psal. xlv. 7. Isai. lxi. 1. John iii. 34. and the miracles of Christ were by him, the finger of God; and those which the apostles wrought for the confirmation of the gospel, were by the power of the Holy Ghost, Matt. xii. 28. Luke xi. 20. Rom. xv. 19. Heb. ii. 3. 4. the work of grace in the heart is his work; regeneration and renovation are of the Holy Ghost; sanctification is called the sanctification of the Spirit; this is not by might nor power of man, but by the Spirit of God, and in which there is such a display of the exceeding greatness of divine power, as is equal to that which was exerted in raising Christ from the dead, Tit. iii. 5. 1 Heb. i. 2. Zech. iv. 6. Eph. i. 19. yea, the resurrection of Christ himself from the dead, is attributed to the Spirit of holiness; and it is by him the Spirit which dwells in the saints, that God will quicken their mortal bodies, Rom. i. 4. and viii. 11.

4. The worship which is due to the Spirit of God, and is given unto him, proves him to be God; for where he not, such worship would never be paid him; not only temples are erected by him, but for him, in which he is worshipped and glorified, Eph. ii. 22. 1 Cor. iii. 16. and vi. 19, 20. Baptism, a solemn act of religious worship, is administered in his name, as in the name of the Father and the Son, Matt. xxviii. 19. Swearing, which is another act of worship, a solemn appeal to the omniscient God, and is mentioned as a branch of serving him, Deut. vi. 13. is made by the Spirit, and he is called upon as a witness to facts, Rom. ix. 1. And prayer, a very principal part of worship, is directed to him, sometimes singly, as in 2 Thess. iii. 5. Cant. iv. 16. and sometimes in conjunction with the other divine Persons, Rev. i. 4, 5. All which prove him to be truly and properly God; and therefore we should be careful to give him the honour and glory due unto him, as to the Father and the Son; and as we trust the Son with the whole affair of our salvation, and trust in him for it; so we should trust the Spirit of God with the work of grace upon our souls; and be confident, that he that has begun it, will perform it; since "it is God that works in us, to will and to do, of his good pleasure."

My Treatise on the Trinity, was written near forty years ago, and when I was a young man; and had I now departed from some words and phrases then used by me, it need not, at such a distance of time, be wondered at: but so far from it, that upon a late revisal of it, I see no reason to retract any thing I have written, either as to sense or expression; save only, in a passage or two of scripture, before observed, which then did not stand so clear in my mind, as proofs of the eternal generation of the Son of God; but upon a more mature consideration of them, I am inclined to think otherwise, and have accordingly altered my sense of them; which alteration, as it is no ways inconsistent with the doctrine as before held by me, so it serves but the more strongly to confirm it.

BOOK II.

OF THE ACTS AND WORKS OF GOD.

)F THE INTERNAL ACTS AND WORKS OF GOD; AND OF HIS DECREES IN GENERAL.

IAVING considered the nature and perfections of God, I shall now proceed
treat of his acts and operations; which are such as are worthy of a Being
ressed of those perfections which have been described; and so must be
orthy of our notice. God is *actus purus & simplicissimus*; he is all act; if
e may so say; having nothing passive in him; and therefore must be active
d operative; *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, John v. 17. in which
ords there is a term fixed, unto which God had worked, the then present time
hrist spoke them; but none from whence he began to work: he had not only
orked in providence till then, since the creation, and not only at the creation,
t from all eternity; his active and eternal mind had always been at work; the
oughts of his heart were always employed in devising, forming, and settling
ings that should be done in time; and as the three divine Persons were taking
finite delight and pleasure in each other, so in the fore-views of what would
done by each of them in time, for the setting forth and manifestation of their
ory.

The acts and works of God may be distinguished into internal and external.
he external acts and works of God, are such as are done in time, visible to
s, or known by us; as creation, providence, redemption, &c. His internal
ts and works, which will be first considered, and are what were done in eter-
ity, are commonly distinguished into personal and essential. Personal acts are
ch as are peculiar to each person, and distinguish the one from the other;
d which have been taken notice of already, in treating of the doctrine of the
rinity. Essential acts are such as are common to them all; for as they have
e same nature and essence, they have the same understanding, will, and affec-
ions; and the same acts appropriate to these belong unto them, both with re-
pect to themselves and the creatures they meant to make; that is to say, they

mutually know one another, love each other, and will each other's happiness and glory; and have the same knowledge of, will concerning, and affection for creatures to be brought into being by them; and among these internal acts of the mind of God, are his purposes and decrees; and these are *purposed in himself*, Eph. i. 9. for what is true of one of his purposes, is true of all; and that there are such in God is certain; and which respects not only the affairs of grace, but those of providence; even the whole earth, and all things in it, Rom. ix. 11. Eph. i. 11. and iii. 11. Isai. xiv. 24, 27. and which go by various names in scripture: sometimes they are called, *the thoughts of his heart*; these are the deep things of God, which lie in the inmost recesses of his mind; are only known by himself, and searched by his Spirit; as the thoughts of a man can only be known by the spirit of man within him, Psal. xxxiii. 11. Jer. xxix. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Sometimes they are called the counsels of God, said to be of old, ancient ones, even from eternity; and to be faithfulness and truth; faithfully and truly performed in time, Isai. xxv. 1. and their being so called does not suppose any degree of ignorance, or want of knowledge in God, or as if he was at a loss what to resolve upon; and therefore consulted with himself, or others, what was fittest to be determined on; but because such resolutions, that are taken after mature deliberation and consultation, are generally formed in the wisest manner; and commonly most successful in the execution of them; therefore the purposes of God, being made with the highest wisdom, from thence they have the name of counsels. They are sometimes called decrees, and so we commonly call them; being the determinations of the mind of God; what he has fixed, settled, and resolved upon, Dan. iv. 17. Zeph. ii. 2. and so the determinate counsel of God, Acts ii. 23. sometimes they are expressed by preordination and predestination; so Christ is said to be foreordained before the foundation of the world, 1 Pet. i. 20. and men are said to be predestinated to the adoption of children, and to an inheritance, Eph. i. 5, 11. that is, afore appointed thereunto in the decrees of God; and of they are signified by his will and pleasure; by the counsel of his will; and by his counsel and pleasure, Rom. ix. 19. Eph. i. 11. Isai. xlvi. 10. they containing and expressing his mind and will; what it is his pleasure should be. Now concerning these may be observed,

I. The proof to be given of them, that there are decrees and purposes in God; not merely ideas of things future, but settled determinations concerning them; which may be evinced from the nature and perfections of God. God is a Spirit, uncreated, infinite, operative, and active: he is a pure act, as before observed; and must have been for ever active in himself; his eternal mind must always have been employed, and continually at work; as the mind of man is never without its thoughts, and the understanding has its acts, and the will its volitions; so God never was without the thoughts of his heart, the acts of his understanding, and the volitions of his will. The Sovereignty of God over all, and his independency, clearly shew, that whatever is done in time, is according to his decrees in eternity; for if any thing comes to pass without the will of God, or contrary to it, or what he has not commanded, that is, decreed, Lam. iii. 37. how is he a sovereign Being, that does according to his will in heaven and in earth, and works all things after the counsel of his will? Dan. iv. 35. Eph. i. 11. and if any thing is by chance and fortune, or the mere effect of second causes, and of the free will of men, independent of the will of God, and if he works under these, in subserviency to them, and takes his measures of operation from them, then he must be dependent on them; and how then can it be said with truth, that *of him, and through him, and to him, are all things?* Rom. xi. 36. The immutability of God requires eternal decrees in him concerning every thing that is in time; for if any thing is done in time, that did not fall under his notice and will in eternity, this must be new to him, and produce a change in him; or if an after-will in time arises in him, respecting any thing he would have done, which he willed not before, this argues a change in him; whereas, in him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. The knowledge of God, supposes and clearly proves and establishes the decrees of God; he is a *God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed,* 1 Sam. ii. 13. he has knowledge of all actions done in time; and such an exact knowledge of them, as if they were weighed by him, and before him; and this knowledge of them is not successive, as they are performed; *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning*, or from eternity, Acts xv. 18. both what he would do himself, and what he wills to be done by others: and this knowledge is founded on his decrees; he knows that such and such things will be, because he has determined they shall be. Once more, the wisdom of God makes it necessary that there should be eternal purposes and decrees in him, concerning things future; he is the all-wise and only wise God, and in wisdom makes all his works; which cannot be supposed to be made without previous thoughts and determinations concerning them: what wise man undertakes a building, without first determining what it shall be, of what materials it shall be made, in what form and manner, as well as for what end? And can we imagine that the all-wise God, who builds all things, should go about them without preconcerted measures, and settled determinations concerning them; *Who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working?* Isai. xxviii. 29.

II. The extent of the decrees and purposes of God, deserve notice and consideration: and they reach to all things that come to pass in the world, from the beginning to the end of it. The world, and all things in it, were created by and according to the will and pleasure of God, Rev. iv. 11. The heavens, their creation, stability, duration, and passing away, and succeeded by new heavens, are by a decree that cannot pass, Psal. cxlviii. 6. The earth, in its different forms, before and after the flood, its continuance, and final destruction, with the day or time of it, are by the word or decree of God, 2 Pet. iii. 5—10. The sea, and the place the receptacle of it, and its boundary, the sand, which its waters cannot pass, are by a perpetual decree, Job xxxviii. 10, 11. Prov. viii 29.

Jer. v. 21. The rain which is exhausted out of it, has its decree; and there is not a shower falls but but by the will of God; whether it be given as a mercy, to make fruitful seasons, or whether it be withheld, or poured down in too great plenty, in a way of judgment; it is all according to the word, will, and decree of God, Job xxviii. 26. Amos iv. 7, 8. and v. 8. The peopling of the world; the distinction of nations; the rise, progress, and ruin of states, kingdoms, and empires, are all according to the decrees of God; even every petty state and kingdom, as well as the four grand monarchies; the destruction of the first of which, the Babylonian monarch, as it was by the decree of the Watchers, and by the demand of the holy Ones; that is, by the decree of the most High; so the origin of it, and its rise to all its glory and grandeur; and the same is true of all the rest; see Deut. xxxii. 8. Dan. ii. 38—44. and iv. 17, 20. Particularly, the people of Israel, a select and distinguished people from all others; their original from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; their servitude in a land not theirs, for four hundred years; their settlement in the land of Canaan; their government under judges and kings; and their several captivities, were all determined; as well as their last destruction, when the desolations determined, were poured upon the desolate; and so is their future conversion and restoration, Gen. xv. 14. Exod. xv. 17. Dan. ix. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 25, 26. The church of God, in its different states, under the legal dispensation; the time appointed of the Father, when it was under tutors and governors, Gal. iv. 1, 2. and under the gospel dispensation, the world to come, the time of reformation, when all things became new: the former covenant waxed old, and vanished away, and the ordinances of it, and new ones took place; and which continues to be the accepted time and day of salvation; all are by divine appointment. The persecutions and sufferings of the church of Christ under the ten Roman emperors, signified by ten days, Rev. ii. 10. and under Rome papal, for a time, and times, and half a time; even forty two months, or one thousand, two hundred and sixty days or years; the time of the church's being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophecying in sackcloth, and of the reign of antichrist, are all fixed by the decree of God; and when the time is up, the angel will sware by the living God, that time shall be no longer; that is, antichristian time, Rev. x. 6. and xi. 2, 3. and xii. 14. and xiii. 5. as well as the glory of the church in the latter day; for which there is a set time; and which God will hasten, in his own time; when there will be great light and prosperity, numerous coversions, a great spread of the gospel, and an enlargement of the interest of Christ, and much purity and righteousness, Psal. cii. 13. Isai. lx. 1—22. In short every thing respecting all the individuals of the world, that have been, are, or shall be, all correspond with the decrees of God, and are according to them; men's coming into the world, the time of it, and all circumstances attending it; all events and occurrences they meet with, throughout the whole time of life; their places of habitation, their stations, calling, and employment; their circumstances of riches and poverty, of health and sickness, adversity and prosperity; their time of going out of the world, with every thing attending that; all are according to the determinate counsel and will of God, Eccles. iii. 1, 2. and vii. 14. Acts xvii. 26. Job xiv. 5. and particularly, all that relate to the people of God, as well their spiritual and eternal, as temporal concerns; their election of God, their redemption by Christ, their effectual vocation, which is according to the purpose of God; the time, manner, and means of it; all their changes in life; their afflictions and distresses, deliverances, and salvations from temptation and trouble; yea, even the final state and condition of good men and bad men, is settled and determined: but this will be more particularly considered under the special decrees of God, respecting rational creatures. All that Christ was to be, do, and suffer for his people, are what the hand and counsel of God before determined; his incarnation, the time of his coming into the world; all that he met with, from the hand of God, from men and devils, whilst in it; his sufferings and death, and all circumstances attending the same, Gal. iv. 4. Acts iv. 28. and ii. 23. Luke xxii. 22, 37. In a word, every thing that comes to pass in this world, from the beginning to the end of it, is pre-ordained; every thing, good and bad; good by his effective decrees, that is, such by which he determines what he will do himself, or shall be done by others; and evil things, by his permissive decrees, by which he suffers things to be done; and which he overrules for his own glory; yea, things contingent, which, with respect to second causes, may seem to be, or not be, as the free actions of men; such as the prophecies, founded on decrees, concerning the names of Josiah and Cyrus, and of actions being performed by them of their own free will, many hundred of years before they were born; nay, even things of the least importance, as well as the greatest; the hairs of men's heads are numbered; two sparrows not worth more than a farthing, and yet fall not to the ground, without the knowledge, will, and purpose of God, Matt. x. 29, 30.

III. The properties of the purposes and decrees of God, may next be considered.—As they are internal acts, they are immanent ones; they are in God, and remain and abide in him; and whilst they are so, they put nothing into actual being, they are concerned about, until they bring forth, or are brought forth into execution: then they pass upon their respective objects, terminate on them, and issue in actual operation; and then they are called transient acts; and till then they are secrets in God's breast, and are unknown to men. —2. They are eternal; as God himself is eternal, so are they; for, as some divines express it, God's decrees are himself decreeing, and therefore if he is from everlasting to everlasting, they are so likewise; if the knowledge of God, respecting all his works, is from the beginning, or from eternity, which arises from his decrees, then they themselves must be from eternity; and if the particular decree of election was before the foundation of the world, as it was, Eph. i. 4. the same must be true of all the decrees of God, which are all of a date; for no new will, nor new act of the will of God, arise in him in time. — 3. The decrees of God are most free; they are the free acts of his will, without any force or compulsion, and are not influenced by any motive from without himself; as "he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy," and exercise it freely, and on whom he pleases; so he freely decreed to have mercy as he pleased; as he hides the things of the gospel from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes, as seems good in sight; he freely determined so to do: indeed, having made those decrees, there is a necessity of the performance of them; but the making of them was quite free. — 4. They are most wise decrees; as God is a wise Being, and does all his works in wisdom, so his decrees are laid in the deepest wisdom; which, though unsearchable by us, and may be unaccountable to us; yet there is, as the apostle expresses it, speaking of them, "a depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God in them," Rom. xi. 33. — 5. They are immutable and unalterable; they are the mountains of brass, out of which come forth the horses and chariots, the executioners of divine providence; signified by mountains, for their immoveableness, and by mountains of brass, for their greater stability and firmness, Zech. vi. 1—8. The decrees of the Medes and Persians, when signed and sealed, were not to be changed or altered; but these are more unchangeable and unalterable than they were: we read of the immutability of the counsel of God, Heb. vi. 17. his purposes and decrees, which, like himself, are the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; without any variableness, or shadow of turning. — 6. The decrees of God are always effectual; they cannot be frustrated or disannulled, or become of no effect; *For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* Isai. xiv. 27. The purposes of men are often frustrated, through want of foresight, not being able to foresee what may turn up, which may hinder the execution of their designs; but no unforeseen accident can arise to put any stop in the way of executing the decrees of God; since all things are at once in his eternal view, who sees the end from the beginning: men sometimes fail of bringing their resolutions into execution, for want of power; but God is omnipotent, and is able to do, and therefore does whatever he he pleases; he is in one mind, and none can turn him; and what he desires, he does; his counsel stands, and he does all his pleasure; and the thoughts of his heart are to all generations. To say no more; the end of the decrees of God in his own glory; he has made, that is, appointed *all things for himself*, for the glorifying his perfections, Prov. xvi. 4. there may be, and are, inferior ends, as the good of his creatures, &c. but his glory is the supreme end, and all others are subordinate to it.

OF THE SPECIAL DECREES OF GOD, RELATING TO RATIONAL CREATURES, ANGELS, AND MEN; AND PARTICULARLY OF ELECTION.

THE special decrees of God, respecting rational creatures, commonly go under he name of predestination; though this sometimes is taken in a large sense, to xpress every thing that God has predetermined; and so it takes in all that has een observed in the preceding chapter; which some call eternal providence, of hich, temporary providence is the execution; for with God there is not only a rovision of things future, but a provision for the certain bringing them to pass; nd the counsel and will of God is the source and spring of all things, and the ule and measure according to which he works, Eph. i. 11. but predestination s usually considered as consisting of two parts, and including the two branches f election and reprobation, both with respect to angels and men; for each of hese have place in both. Angels; some of them are called elect angels, 2 Tim. 21. others are said to be reserved in chains, in the chains of God's purposes nd providence, unto the judgment of the great day, 2 Pet. ii. 4. Men; some f them are vessels of mercy, afore-prepared for glory; others vessels of wrath, itted for destruction; some are the election, or the elect persons, that obtain ighteousness, life, and salvation; and others are the rest that are left in, and iven up to blindness, Rom. ix. 22, 23. and xi. 7. Though sometimes predestination only respects that branch of it called election, and the predestinated ignify only the elect; for who else are called, justified and glorified, enjoy doption and the heavenly inheritance? not, surely, the none-elect, Rom. viii. 29, 30. Eph. i. 5, 11. This branch of predestination, must be considered first; shall begin with,

I. The election of angels; of this the scriptures speak but sparingly, and herefore the less is necessary to be said concerning it: that there are some ngels that are elect is certain, from the proof already given: this is a similarity etween their election and the election of men; though in some things there appears a little difference.—1. The election of angels, as well as of men, is of God: he is the efficient cause of it; it is God that has chosen them, and distinguished hem from others, and therefore they are called the *angels of God*, Luke xii. 8, 9. not merely because they are his creatures, so are the evil angels; but because hey are his chosen, his favourites, and appointed to be happy with him to all eternity.—2. Their election, as that of men, lies in a distinction and separation from the rest of their species, they are not only distinguished from them by their characters, the one being holy angels, the others the angels that sinned; but by their state and condition, the one being preserved from apostacy, and continued in their first estate; the other left to fall into sin, and from their former state, and reserved unto judgment.—3. In their election they were considered as on an equal foot with others not elected, as men are; as men are considered, when chosen, as in the pure mass, having done neither good nor evil, so were angels; this must be out of all question, with respect to them, since the elect angels never fell, never were in any corrupt state, and could not be so considered: besides, their preservation from apostacy, and their confirmation, by grace, in the state in which they were created, are in consequence of their election; and therefore must be previous to the fall of the rest, who, with them, must be considered in the pure mass of creatureship; wherefore the choice of the one, and the leaving of the other, must be entirely owing to the sovereign will of God.—4. Their election, though it is not said to be made in Christ, as the election of men; nor could it be made in him, considered as Mediator; since they having never sinned against God, and offended him, they needed him not to mediate between God and them, and to make peace and reconciliation; yet they might be chosen in him, as they seem to be, as an Head of conservation; as an Head both of eminence to rule over them, protect and preserve them in their state; and of influence, to communicate grace and strength to them; to confirm them in their state in which they are; for Christ is *the head of all principality and power*, Col. ii. 10.—5. Though the angels are not chosen to salvation as men are, as that signifies a deliverance from sin and misery; seeing they never sinned, and so were never in a miserable condition, and needed no Saviour and Redeemer; yet they are chosen to happiness, to communion with God now, whose face they ever behold; and to a confirmed state of holiness and impeccability, and to the enjoyment of God, and the society of elect men to all eternity.

II. The election of men to grace and glory, is next to be considered; and it may be proper in the first place to take some notice of the election of Christ, as man and mediator; who is God's first and chief elect; and is, by way of eminency, called his elect; *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth*, Isai. xlii. 1. and oftentimes the chosen of God, Psal. lxxxix. 3. Luke xxiii. 35. 1 Pet. ii. 4. Which character not only denotes his choiceness and excellency, and the high esteem he is in with God; who, though disallowed, disesteemed, and rejected by men, is chosen of God, and precious; but either,—1. It respects the choice of the human nature of Christ to the grace of union with him as the Son of God. God prepared a body, or an human nature, for him, in his eternal purposes and decrees; in the book of which all the members thereof were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet, before there were none of them, Heb. x. 5, Psal. cxxxix. 16. Among all the individuals of human nature, which rose up in the divine mind, to be brought into being by him, this was singled out from among them, and appointed to union with the second Person in the Godhead; this was sanctified, and set apart, and sent into the world; in which Joseph was a type of it, who was separated from his brethren; and hence this human nature of Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost above his fellows, and had the gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure; and was raised to such honour and dignity, as none of the angels ever were, or will be, Heb, i. 13. or,—2. The character of elect, as given to Christ, respects the choice of him to his office as Mediator, in which he was set up, and with which he was invested, and had the glory of it before the world began. He was first chosen and set up as an Head; and then his people were chosen, as members of him; he was chosen to be the Saviour of the body, the church; as they are appointed to salvation by him, he is appointed to be the Saviour of them; this is meant by laying help on one that is mighty; and as their salvation is through his sufferings and death, he was fore-ordained, before the foundation of the world, to be the slain Lamb; through whose precious blood their redemption would be obtained; he was set forth, in the eternal decree and purpose of God, to be the propitiation for sin, to make atonement and satisfaction for it, and procure the pardon of it, 1 Pet. i. 18—20. Rom. iii. 25. Christ is appointed to be the judge of quick and dead; as well as a day is appointed in which God will judge the world in righteousness, by the man Christ Jesus, whom he has ordained for that purpose, Acts x. 42. and xvii. 31. But what will now be chiefly attended to, and what the scriptures speak so largely of, is the election of men in Christ unto eternal life.

Some are of opinion that this doctrine of election, admitting it to be true, should not be published, neither preached from the pulpit, nor handled in schools and academies, nor treated of in the writings of men; the reasons they give, are because it is a secret, and secret things belong to God; and because it tends to fill men's minds with doubts about their salvation, and to bring them into distress, and even into despair; and because some may make a bad use of it, to indulge themselves in a sinful course of life, and argue, that if they are elected they shall be saved, let them live as they may, and so it opens a door to all licentiousness: but these reasons are frivolous and groundless; the doctrine of election is no secret, it is clearly and fully revealed, and written as with a sunbeam in the sacred scriptures; it is true indeed, it cannot be said of particular persons, that such a man is elected, and such a man is reprobated; and especially when both appear to be in a state of ungeneracy; yet when men, in a judgment of charity, may be hoped to be called by grace, they may be concluded to be the elect of God, though it cannot be said with precision; and on the other hand, there may be black marks of reprobation on some men, or at least things have such a very dark aspect on them, that we are apt to say, when we hear a man cursing and swearing, and see him in all excess of wickedness with boldness and impudence, what a reprobate creature is this? though indeed no man, be he ever so vile, is out of the reach of powerful efficacious grace; and therefore it cannot be absolutely said that he is rejected of God: and whereas there may be only the appearance of grace, and not the truth of it, in such that profess to have it; it cannot be said with certainty that such an one is an elect person, yet in charity it may be so concluded: however, a truly gracious man may know for himself his election of God, as the apostle affirms; and that in this way, the gospel being come to him, *not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost*, 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. who by means of it has begun, and will carry on and perform the work of grace in him; wherefore such persons will not be filled with doubts and fears about their salvation, nor be led into distress and despair through the doctrine of election; nor need any be distressed about it that are enquiring the way of salvation, or have any knowledge of it; for the first question to be put to a man by himself, is not, am I elected? but, am I born again? am I a new creature? am I called by the grace of God, and truly converted? If a man can arrive to satisfaction in this matter, he can have no doubt about his election; that then is a clear case and out of all question. The doctrine of regeneration, which asserts that a man must be born again, or he cannot see and enter into the kingdom of heaven, may as well be objected to, as that of election; since it is as difficult to come to satisfaction about a man's regeneration, as about his election; and when once the one is a clear case, the other must be likewise; and when it is, what thankfulness and joy does it produce? And if the apostle thought himself bound to give thanks to God for his choice of the Thessalonians to salvation; how much more reason had he to bless the God and Father of Christ for his own election, as he does 2 Thess. ii. 13. Eph. i. 3, 4. With what exultation and triumph may a believer in Christ take up those words of the apostle, and use them with application to himself, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Rom. viii. 33. yea our Lord Jesus Christ exhorts his disciples, rather to rejoice that their names were written in heaven, than that the spirits were subject to them, or that they were possessed of extraordinary gifts, as to cast out devils. With great truth and propriety is it expressed in the seventeenth Article of the church of England, that the consideration of this doctrine is full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons: and as for the charge of licentiousness, what is there but what a wicked man may abuse to encourage himself in sin? as even the patience and long-suffering of God; ungodly men may turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, and every doctrine of it; and so this, contrary to its nature, use and tendency. Strange! that this doctrine should of itself lead to licentiousness, when the thing itself, contained in it, is the source of all holiness; men are chosen according to this doctrine to be holy; they are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, which is secured by this decree as certainly as salvation itself; wherefore those reasons are not sufficient to intimidate and deter us from receiving this doctrine, professing and publishing it; and the rather, since it is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, frequently suggested and declared by them; what means else when our Lord speaks of the elect of God, for whose sake the days of tribulation should be shortened; and that it was impossible the elect should be deceived; and that God will avenge his own elect?

Matt. xxiv. 22, 24. Luke xviii. 7. how clearly and fully does the apostle Paul enlarge on this doctrine of election in Rom. ix. and xi. and in Eph. i. and 2 Thess. ii. and in other places? and since it is so plentifully declared in the Bible, and is a part of scripture given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, and is written for our learning, to teach us humility, to depress the pride of man, and to magnify the sovereign grace of God in his salvation; we need not be ashamed of it, nor ought we to conceal it; and the apostle exhorts to make our election as well as calling sure, 2 Pet. i. 10. but how should men do this, if they are not taught the doctrine of it; led into an acquaintance with it; instructed into the truth, nature and use of it, and the way and means whereby it is to be made sure? I proceed then,

1. To observe the phrases by which it is expressed in scripture, whereby may be learnt what is the true meaning of the words election and elect, as used in scripture with respect to this doctrine. It is expressed by being ordained to eternal life, Acts xiii. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed*; by which ordination is meant no other than the predestination, choice and appointment of men to everlasting life and salvation by Jesus Christ; and from whence it appears that this is of particular persons, of some and not all, though many; that it is not to temporary privileges and enjoyments, but to grace and glory; and that faith is not the cause, but the sure and certain fruit and effect of it; and that both eternal life through Christ, and believing in him, are infallibly secured by this act of grace. Some, in order to evade the force and evidence of these words in favour of election, would have them rendered, *As many as were disposed for eternal life, believed*; but this is not agreeable to the use of the word throughout the book of the Acts by the divine historian, where it always signifies determination and appointment, and not disposition; and so by our translators it is rendered determined in Acts xv. 2. and appointed in chap. xxii. 10. and xxviii. 23. and here preordained, in the vulgate Latin version, and by Arias Montanus; and besides, there are no good dispositions for eternal life in men before faith; whatsoever is not of faith, is sin; and men, in a state of unbelief and unregeneracy, are foolish and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures; living in malice, hateful, and hating one another; without hope, and without God in the world; and injurious to good men, Rom. xiv. 23. Tit. iii. 3. Eph. ii. 12. 1 Tim. i. 13. and admitting there may be what may be called dispositions for eternal life; let a desire of it, and seeking for it, be accounted such; this may be where faith in Christ does not follow; as in the young man, who asked what he must do to obtain it; and yet, when instructed by Christ, was so far from receiving his instructions, and believing him, that he turned his back on him, and went away from him sorrowful, Matt. xix. 16, 22. Let an attentive hearing of the word be reckoned a good disposition for eternal life; this was found in many of Christ's hearers, and yet they believed not the report he made, of which he complains; and it is highly probable, that many of those attentive hearers of him, were in a few days,

among those that cried, Crucify him, crucify him, Luke xix. 48. and xxiii. 18, 21. Isai. liii. 1. and after all, one would think that the Jews, who were externally religious, and were expecting the Messiah; and especially the devout and honourable women, were more disposed for eternal life, than the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles; and yet the latter rejoiced at hearing the word, glorified it, and believed; when the former did not, but persecuted the preachers of it: from whence it follows, that the faith of the believing Gentiles did not spring from previous dispositions to eternal life; but was the fruit and effect of divine ordination.

This act of God is also expressed by the names of persons being written in heaven, and in the book of life, called, the Lamb's book of life; because his name stands first in it, was present at the writing of it, and is concerned in that eternal life which it has respect unto, Luke x. 20. Heb. xii. 22. Phil. iv. 3. Rev. xiii. 8. All which shews that it is an act of God in heaven, and respects the happiness of men there; is of particular persons, whose names are in a special manner known of God, and as distinct from others; and is sure and certain, and will abide. But the more common phrases used concerning it, are those of being chosen and elected; hence the objects of it are called God's elect, and the election; that is, persons elected, Eph. i. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Rom. viii. 33. and xi. 7. which clearly imply, that only some, and not all men, are the objects of it; *I speak not of you all*, says Christ; *I know whom I have chosen*, John xiii. 18. not all, but some of you; where all are taken, whether persons or things, no choice is made; if some are chosen, others are not, but left; and in this case the number chosen is but few; *Many are called, but few chosen*, Matt. xx. 16 hence those that are chosen, are called *a remnant, according to the election of grace*; and those that are not chosen, the rest that are left, Rom. xi. 6, 7. Wherefore the election treated of is not,

1. An election of a nation to some external privileges, as the people of Israel, who were chosen of God to be a special people above all people on the face of the earth; not for their quantity or quality, their number or their goodness; but because such was the pleasure of God: but this choice of them as a nation, was only to some outward benefits and blessings; as, besides the good land of Canaan, the word, and worship, and ordinances of God, with others, mentioned in Rom. ix. 4, 5. but in the same context it is observed, that they were not all Israel, or God's elect, redeemed and called people, in the most special sense; nor all children of God by adopting grace; nor were all predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ; it was only a remnant of them that were of this sort, which should be eternally saved; and whom, if God had not reserved, they had been as Sodom and Gomorrah, verse 6—29. And so this nation of ours is selected and distinguished from many others, by various blessings of goodness, and particularly by having the means of grace; yet all the individuals of it cannot be thought to be the objects of election to special grace, and eternal glory.

2 Nor of an election to offices; as the sons of the house of Aaron were chosen to minister, in the office of priests, to the Lord; and as Saul was chosen to be king over Israel; and the twelve were chosen to be the apostles of Christ; for there were many in the priestly office very bad men; and Saul behaved so ill, as to be rejected of God from being king, that is, from the kingdom being continued in his family; and though Christ chose twelve to be his apostles, one of them was a devil: so that though those were chosen to offices, and even to the highet offices in the church and state, and yet not to eternal life.

3. Nor of an election of whole bodies and communities of men, under the character of churches, to the enjoyment of the means of grace: Eph. i. 4. is no instance of this. It is not certain the apostle wrote that epistle to the Ephesians, as to a church, but to some there described, as saints and faithful in Christ Jesus; and it is quite certain, that those who he says were chosen in Christ, were not the Ephesians only, but others also; the apostle, and others, who were not members of that church, yet shared in that grace, and other blessings aftermentioned, and were they that first trusted in Christ; and though the Ephesians may be included, yet it is not said of them as a church; besides, the phrase of being chosen in Christ, is sometimes used of a single person, and so is not appropriate to communities and churches, Rom. xvi. 13. To all which may be added, that those said to be chosen in Christ, are not said to be chosen as a church, or to be one, or to church-privileges; but to holiness here; and to a blameless state, or a state of perfection hereafter; even to grace and glory. Nor is the character of elect, given to the Colossians, chap. iii. 12. given to them as a church; for the same may be observed of them as of the Ephesians, that they are not wrote to as a church; but described by the same epithets as they are; and if they were, this might be said of them in a judgment of charity, since they all of them professed faith in Christ; and the greater part of them doubtless, in reality were possessed of it, as a fruit and effect, and so an evidence of their election; by which the apostle enforces their mutual duties to one another. And in like manner the Thessalonians are said to be chosen of God, and to know their election of God, since the gospel was come to them, attended with the power and Spirit of God, 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. 2 Thess. ii. 13. and all of them had made a profession of Christ, and therefore it might be charitably hoped they were the elect of God; not chosen merely to outward means; but, as it is said, to salvation by Christ, and to the obtaining of his glory. And when the apostle Peter speaks of some he writes to as elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, and as a chosen generation, 1 Pet. i. 2, and ii. 9. he does not write to them, and speak of them, as a church; for he writes to strangers, scattered abroad in several countries; nor as chosen barely to the means of grace and outward privileges, but to grace and glory; since they are said to be chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.

4. Nor is this act of election under consideration, to be understood of the ef-

fectual vocation of particular persons; though that is sometimes expressed by choosing men out of the world; when they are separated and distinguished from the men of it; and by choosing, that is, calling the foolish things of the world, and by choosing the poor of it, who become rich in faith, and appear to be heirs of the kingdom, John xv. 19. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. James ii. 5. the reason of which is, because vocation is a certain fruit and effect of election, and is a sure and certain evidence of it; *For whom* God did *predestinate, them he also called*, Rom. viii. 30. But then election and vocation differ, as the cause and the effect, the tree and its fruit, a thing and the evidence of it. But,

5. This is to be understood of the choice of certain persons by God, from all eternity, to grace and glory; it is an act by which men are chosen of God's good will and pleasure, before the world was, to holiness and happiness, to salvation by Christ, to partake of his glory, and to enjoy eternal life, as the free gift of God through him, Eph. i. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Acts xiii. 48. And this is the first and foundation-blessing; according to which all spiritual blessings are dispensed; and is, by the apostle, set at the front of them all; and is the first link in the golden chain of man's salvation, Eph. i. 3, 4. Rom. viii. 30.

II. The next thing to be considered is, by whom election is made, and in whom it is made: it is made by God, and it is made in Christ. 1. It is made by God, as the efficient cause of it; God, who is a sovereign Being, who does and may do whatever he pleases in heaven and in earth, among angels and men; and has a right to do what he will with his own; as with his own things, temporal and spiritual blessings; so with his own creatures. Shall he be denied that which every man thinks he has a right unto and does? Do not kings choose their own ministers; masters their servants; and every man his own favourites, friends, and companions? And may not God choose whom he pleases to communion with him, both here and hereafter; or to grace and glory? He does this, and therefore it is called election of God; of which God is the efficient cause, 1 Thess. i. 4. and the persons chosen are called God's elect, Rom. viii. 33. Luke xviii. 7. This act is sometimes, and for the most part, ascribed to God the Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; as he is said to bless men with spiritual blessings, so to choose them in Christ, before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 3, 4. and the persons chosen are said to be *elect, according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 2. where the Person that chooses is not only described as the Father, but is distinguished from the Spirit, through whose sanctification, and from Jesus Christ, to whose obedience, and the sprinkling of whose blood, men are chosen by him. Sometimes it is ascribed to Christ, and he takes it to himself, *I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen*, John xiii. 18. this cannot be understood of Christ's choosing his disciples to the office of apostleship, for all the twelve were chosen to that; but of his choosing them to eternal life; and this is what he could not say of them all, for one of them was the son of perdition;

and hence the elect are called Christ's elect; not only because chosen in him and given to him, but because chosen by him; *He* (the Son of man) *shall send his angels—and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,* Matt. xxiv. 30, 31. Nor is the blessed Spirit to be excluded; for since he has a place in the decree of the means, in order that the end may be attained, and has so much to do in the blessings, gifts, and operations of grace, leading on to the execution of the decree; he must have a concern with the Father and he Son in the act itself, as the efficient cause of it. And this now being the act of God, it is for ever; for whatever God does in a way of special grace, it s for ever; it is unchangeable and irrevocable; men may choose some to be their avourites and friends for a while, and then alter their minds, and choose others n their room; but God never acts such a part, he is in one mind, and none an turn him; his purpose, according to election, or with respect to that, stands ure, firm, and unalterable. — 2. This act is made in Christ, *according as he hath hosen us in him,* Eph. i. 4. Election does not find men in Christ, but puts them here; it gives them a being in him, and union to him; which is the foundation f their open being in Christ at conversion, which is the manifestation and evidence of this; If any man be in Christ, even in the secret way, by electing grace, he is a new creature, sooner or later; which is an evidence of it; for when he becomes a new creature, this shews him to have been in Christ before, rom whence this grace proceeds; but these two, an open and secret being in Christ, differ in this, that the one is in time, and but a little while ago, the ther from eternity; the one is the evidence of the other; *I knew a man in Christ bove fourteen years ago,* says the apostle, 2 Cor. xii. 2. meaning himself; who was, about that time, and not before, called, converted, and become a believer in Christ, and so had open being in Christ; and, in this sense, one saint may e in Christ before another; *Salute Andronicus and Junia — who also were in Christ before me,* says the same apostle, Rom. xvi. 7. they being called and onverted before he was; but with respect to electing grace, one is not before nother, the whole body of the elect being chosen together in Christ; which is he sense of the text in Ephesians: and which is not to be understood of being hosen for the sake of him; for though they are predestinated to be conformed o his image, that he may be the first-born among many brethren, and in all hings have the pre-eminence; and unto salvation by him, that he may have the lory of it; and to the obtaining of his glory, partake of it, and have communion with him for evermore, that he may have praise from them to all eternity: yet not his merits, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, nor his obedience, sufferings, and death, are the cause of election; these are the meritorious cause of redemption, forgiveness of sin, and justification, and salvation; not of election: the reasons why men are elected, are not because Christ has hed his blood, died for them, redeemed and saved them; but Christ has done ll this for them because they are elect; *I lay down my life for the sheep,* says

Christ, John x. 15. sheep and elect are terms convertible, and signify the same persons, even such before they are called and converted; as appears from the following verse: now it is not Christ's laying down his life for them makes them sheep, and elect; they are so previous to that; but because they are sheep, and chosen ones in Christ, and given him by his Father, therefore he laid down his life for them. Christ himself is the object of election; he is stiled God's elect; and is said to be foreordained, before the foundation of the world, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people, Isai. xliii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 20. Now, though as a divine Person, he is, with his Father, the efficient cause of election; yet, as Mediator, he is the means, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, of executing that decree: men are chosen in him as their Head, and they as members of him, not one before another; he and they are chosen together in the same decree; they are given to him in it, and he to them; they are put into his hands, and preserved in him; and hence have a secret being in him, and union to him; hence they partake of all grace and spiritual blessings; they are first of God in Christ by electing grace, and then he is made every thing to them; and they receive every thing from him they want, 1 Cor. i. 30.

III. The objects of election are to be next enquired after, who are men; for with such only is now our concern; and these not as under such and such characters, as called, converted, believers in Christ, holy and good men, and persevering in faith and holiness unto the end; for they are not elected because they are called, converted, &c. but because they are elected they become all this; and if they are not elected, especially until they have persevered unto the end, I can see no need of their being elected at all; for when they have persevered unto the end, they are immediately in heaven, in the enjoyment of eternal life, and can have no need to be chose to it: and all these characters put together, only amount to such a proposition, that he that believes, and endures to the end shall be saved. But God does not choose propositions, but persons; not characters, but men, nakedly and abstractly considered; and these not all men, but some, as the nature of election, and the very sense of the word suggests: as in effectual vocation, the fruit and evidence of it, men are taken out of the world, and separated from the men among whom they have had their conversation in times past; so in election, they are distinguished from others; as in redemption men are redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; so in election they are chosen out of the same: election and redemption are of the same persons, and are commensurate to each other; they are distinct from the rest of mankind; vessels of mercy, in distinction from vessels of wrath; a seed, a remnant, according to the election of grace; and election itself, as distinguished from the others, called the rest; whilst some are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, others being beloved of God, are chosen from the beginning to salvation by Christ; for certain it is, that all the individuals of mankind, neither partake of the means fixed in the decree of election, sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; nor attain to the end of it, which, with respect to men, is eternal life and happiness; for all men are not sanctified by the Spirit of God; nor have all men faith in Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; nor do all men enter into life, or are eternally saved; some go into everlasting punishment. But the number of the chosen ones is not confined to any particular nation; for as God is the God both of the Jews and of the Gentiles; so those whom he has in election prepared for glory, in consequence of which he calls them by his grace; these are not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; and who are eventually, for the most part, the poor of this world, James ii. 5. men mean and despicable in the eyes of it; and these are but few in comparison, not only of the men of the world, but even of those that are externally called; *Many are called, but few are chosen,* Matt. xx. 16. they are but a little flock, it is the pleasure of their heavenly Father to give the kingdom to, prepared for them from the foundation of the world: though considered absolutely by themselves, they are a great multitude, which no man can number, Luke xii. 32. Rev. vii. 9.

And here is the proper place to discuss that question, Whether men were considered, in the mind of God, in the decree of election, as fallen or unfallen; as in the corrupt mass, through the fall; or in the pure mass of creatureship, previous to it; and as to be created? There are some that think that the latter, so considered, were the objects of election in the divine mind; who are called Supralapsarians; though of these some are of opinion that man was considered, as to be created, or creatable; and others, as created, but not fallen. The former seems best; that of the vast number of individuals that came up in the divine mind, that his power could create, those that he meant to bring into being, he designed to glorify himself by them in some way or another; the decree of election, respecting any part of them, may be distinguished into the decree of the end, and the decree of the means. The decree of the end, respecting some, is either subordinate to their eternal happiness, or ultimate; which is more properly the end, the glory of God; and if both are put together, it is a state of everlasting communion with God, for the glorifying the riches of his sovereign grace and goodness, Eph. i. 5, 6. The decree of the means, includes the decree to create men, to permit them to fall, to recover them out of it through redemption by Christ, to sanctify them by the grace of the Spirit, and completely save them; and which are not to be reckoned as materially many decrees, but as making one formal decree; or they are not to be considered as subordinate, but co-ordinate means, and as making up one entire complete medium; for it is not to be supposed that God decreed to create man, that he might permit him to fall; nor that he decreed to permit him to fall, that he might redeem, sanctify, and save him; but he decreed all this that he might glorify his grace, mercy, and justice. And in this way of considering the decrees of God, they think they sufficiently obviate and remove the slanderous calumny cast upon them, with respect to the other branch of predestination.

which leaves men in the same state when others are chosen, and that for the glory of God. Which calumny is, that according to them, God made man to damn him; whereas, according to their real sentiments, God decreed to make man, and made man, neither to damn him nor save him, but for his own glory; which end is answered in them, some way or another. Again, they argue that the end is first in view, before the means; and the decree of the end is, in order of nature, before the decree of the means; and what is first in intention, is last in execution: now as the glory of God is the last in execution, it must be the first in intention; wherefore men must be considered, in the decree of the end, as not yet created and fallen; since the creation and permission of sin, belong to the decree of the means; which, in order of nature, is after the decree of the end: and they add to this, that if God first decreed to create man, and suffer him to fall, and then, out of the fall chose some to grace and glory; he must decree to create man without an end, which is to make God to do what no wise man would; for when a man is about to do any thing, he purposes an end, and then contrives and fixes on ways and means to bring about that end: and it cannot be thought that the all-wise and only-wise God should act otherwise; who does all his works in wisdom, and has wisely designed them for his own glory, Prov. xvi. 4. they think also that this way of conceiving and speaking of these things, best expresses the sovereignty of God in them; as declared in the ninth of the Romans; where he is said to will such and such things, for no other reason but because he wills them; and hence the objector to the sovereign decrees of God is brought in saying, *Why does he yet find fault? who hath resisted his will?* and the answer to it is taken from the sovereign power of the potter over his clay; to which is added, *What if God willing*, &c. to do this or that, who has any thing to say against it? he is accountable to none, verse 15—22. And this way of reasoning is thought to suit better with the instance of Jacob and Esau, the *children being not yet born, and having done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand*, 10. than with supposing persons considered in predestination, as already created, and in the corrupt mass; and particularly it best suits with the unformed clay of the potter, out of which he makes one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; on which Beza remarks, that if the apostle had considered mankind as corrupted, he would not have said, that some vessels were made to honour, and some to dishonour; but rather, that seeing all the vessels would be fit for dishonour, some were left in that dishonour; and others translated from dishonour to honour. They further observe, that elect angels could not be considered in the corrupt mass, when chosen; since they never fell, and therefore it is most reasonable, that as they, so those angels that were not chosen, were considered in the same pure mass of creatureship; and so in like manner men; to which they add the human nature of Christ, which is the object of election to a greater dignity than that of angels and men, could not be considered in the corrupt mass, since it fell not in Adam, nor never came into any corrupt state; and yet it was chosen out of the people, Psal. lxxxix. 19. and consequently the people out of whom it was chosen, must be considered as yet not fallen and corrupt; and who also were chosen in him, and therefore not so considered. These are hints of some of the arguments used on this side of the question.

On the other hand, those who are called Sublapsarians, and are for men being considered as created and fallen, in the decree of election, urge, John xv. 19. *I have chosen you out of the world.* Now the world is full of wickedness, it lies in it, is under the power of the wicked one; the inhabitants of it live in sin, and all of them corrupt and abominable; and therefore they that are chosen out of them must be so too: but this text is not to be understood of eternal election, but of effectual vocation; by which men are called and separated from the world, among whom they have had their conversation before conversion, and according to the course of it have lived. They further observe, that the elect are called vessels of mercy; which supposes them to have been miserable, and so sinful, and to stand in need of mercy; and must be so considered in their election: but though through various means the elect are brought to happiness, which are owing to the mercy of God; such as the mission of Christ to save them, the forgiveness of their sins, their regeneration and salvation; and so fitly called vessels of mercy; yet it follows not that they were considered as in need of mercy in their choice to happiness. It is also said, that men are chosen in Christ as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; which implies, that an offence is given and taken, and reconciliation is to be made, and redemption from sin, and the curse of the law broken, and complete salvation to be effected by Christ; all which supposes men to be sinful, as it does: but then men are chosen in Christ, not as the meritorious cause of election, but as the means, or medium, of bringing them to the happiness they are chosen to. It is moreover, taken notice of, that the transitus in scripture, is not from election to creation, but to vocation, justification, adoption, sanctification, and salvation. But, for instance, can vocation be supposed without creation? It is thought that this way of considering men as fallen, in the decree of election, is more mild and gentle than the other, and best accounts for the justice of God; that since all are in the corrupt mass, it cannot be unjust in him to choose some out of it to undeserved happiness; and to leave others in it, who perish justly in it for their sins; or that since all are deserving of the wrath of God for sin, where is the injustice of appointing some not unto the wrath they deserve, but unto salvation by Christ, when others are fore-ordained to just condemnation and wrath for their sin? But on the other hand, what reason also can there be to charge God with injustice, that inasmuch as all are considered in the pure mass of creatureship, that some should be chosen in it, and others be passed by in it; and both for his own glory? These are some of the principal arguments used on both sides; the difference is not so great as may be thought at first sight; for both agree in the main and material things in the doctrine of election; as, — 1. That it is personal and particular, is of persons by name, whose names are written in the

Lamb's book of life. — 2. That it is absolute and unconditional, not depending on the will of men, nor on any thing to be done by the creature. — 3. That it is wholly owing to the will and pleasure of God; and not to the faith, holiness, obedience, and good works of men; nor to a foresight of all or any of these. — 4. That both elect, and non-elect, are considered alike, and are upon an equal foot in the decree of predestination; as those that are for the corrupt mass they suppose that they were both considered in it equally alike, so that there was nothing in the one, that was not in the other, which was a reason why the one should be chosen and the other left; so those that are for the pure mass, suppose both to be considered in the same, and as not yet born, and having done neither good nor evil. — 5. That it is an eternal act in God, and not temporal; or which commenced not in time, but from all eternity; for it is not the opinion of the Sublapsarians, that God passed the decree of election after men were actually created and fallen; only that they were considered in the divine mind, from all eternity, in the decree of election, as if they were created and fallen; wherefore, though they differ in the consideration of the object of election, as thus and thus diversified, yet they agree in the thing, and agree to differ, as they should, and not charge one another with unsoundness and heterodoxy; for which there is no reason. Calvin was for the corrupt mass; Beza, who was co-pastor with him in the church at Geneva, and his successor, was for the pure mass; and yet they lived in great peace, love and harmony. The Contra-remonstrants in Holland, when Arminianism first appeared among them, were not agreed in this point; some took one side of the question, and some the other; but they both united against the common adversary, the Arminians. Dr. Twiss, who was as great a Supralapsarian as perhaps ever was, and carried things as high as any man ever did, and as closely studied the point, and as well understood it, and perhaps better than any one did, and yet he confesses that it was only *apex logicus*, a point in logic; and that the difference only lay in the ordering and ranging the decrees of God: and, for my own part, I think both may be taken in; that in the decree of the end, the ultimate end, the glory of God, for which he does all things, men might be considered in the divine mind as creable, not yet created and fallen; and that in the decree of the means, which, among other things, takes in the mediation of Christ, redemption by him, and the sanctification of the spirit; they might be considered as created, fallen, and sinful, which these things imply; nor does this suppose separate acts and decrees in God, or any priority and posteriority in them; which in God are but one and together; but our finite minds are obliged to consider them one after another, not being able to take them in together and at once.

IV. The date of election is next to be considered. And certain it is, that it was before men were born; *The children not being yet born—that the purpose of God according to election, might stand*, Rom. ix. 11. nor can there be any difficulty in admitting this; for if there is none in admitting that a person may be chosen and appointed to an office before he is born, as there can be none, since

God has asserted it of Jeremiah; *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee*, or set thee apart, *and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations*, Jer. i. 5. then there can be none in admitting that a person so early may be chosen to grace and glory. And this also is before the new birth, or before calling; for calling is the fruit and effect of election; the apostle says of the Thessalonians, *God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. not from the beginning of the preaching of the gospel to them, or of the coming of that unto them; for that may come to, and be preached among a people, but not to their profit; may be without success, yea, be the savour of death unto death, Heb. iv. 2, 2 Cor. ii. 16. and when the gospel first came to the Thessalonians, and was preached among them, some believed, and others did not; yea the Bereans are preferred unto them, for their ready reception of the word; indeed, to some at Thessalonica, it came not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and which was an evidence of their election, and by which they might know it. But then this was only a manifestation of their election; that itself was previous to the gospel's coming to them, and its operation on them; it was displayed therein, and thereby; but it commenced before; see Acts xvii. 1—11. 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. nor was the choice of them from the beginning of their conversion, or when they were effectually called by the gospel; for that, as has been observed, is the effect and evidence of election; election is that according to which vocation is, and therefore must be before it; *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called*, Rom. viii. 30. see 2 Tim. i. 9. Nor is this phrase, from the beginning, to be understood of the beginning of time, or of the creation; as in John viii. 44. 1 John iii. 8. for though election began to operate and display itself in the distinct seeds of the woman, and of the serpent, in Abel and Cain, the immediate posterity of the first man, and the distinction has continued ever since; yet the thing itself which makes this distinction, or is the ground of it, was long before; to which may be added, that this phrase is expressive of eternity; *I was set up from everlasting; from the beginning; or ever the earth was*, Prov. viii. 23. that is, before the world began, even from all eternity; as its being inclosed by such phrases as express the same shews: and in this sense is it to be taken in the text in the Thessalonians; and it is in so many words affirmed by the apostle, that this choice of men to holiness and happiness, was made *in Christ before the foundation of the world*, Eph. i. 4. and elsewhere it is said, that the book of life of the Lamb, in which the names of God's elect are set down, and the names of others left out, was written as early, Rev. xiii. 8. and xvii. 8. And that this act of election is an eternal act, or from eternity, may be concluded, — 1. From the foreknowledge of God, which is eternal; God from all eternity foreknew all persons and things; there is nothing in time but what was known to him from eternity, Acts xv. 18. Now men are elected according to the fore-knowledge of God; and "whom he did foreknow he did predestinate," 1 Pet. i. 2. Rom. viii. 29. wherefore as the fore-knowledge of God is eternal, the choice he makes upon it must be so too; and especially as this fore-knowledge is not a bare prescience of persons and things, but what has love and affection to the objects of it joined unto it: wherefore, — 2. The eternity of election may be concluded from the love of God to his people; for it is to that it is owing: *electio præsupponit dilectionem*, election presupposes love; hence the apostle sets the character of being beloved of the Lord first, to the Thessalonians being chosen by him to salvation 2 Thess. ii. 13. it is the immediate effect of love, and is inseparably connected with it; yea, is expressed by it; *Jacob have I loved*, Rom. ix. 13. Now the love of God is an everlasting love; not only endures to all eternity, but was from all eternity: God loved Christ, as he affirms, before the foundation of the world; and in the same place he says, his Father loved his people as he loved him, John xvii. 23, 24. — 3. It may be argued from the covenant of grace, which is an everlasting covenant, from everlasting to everlasting; in which the goings of Christ as Mediator were of old, and promises were made before the world began; and grants of grace were made, and blessings of grace provided as early; and which covenant was made with the chosen of God; with Christ, the chosen Head, and with his people, as chosen in him; so that if this covenant was from everlasting, and made with chosen ones in Christ, their representative, then the choice of them in him must be as early, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Tit i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 9. Psal. lxxxix. 3. Mic. v. 2. and nothing is more clear than that he was set up as Mediator of this covenant from everlasting; and that this people were chosen in him, their covenant Head, before the foundation of the world, Prov. viii. 22. Eph. i. 4. — 5. This appears from the early preparation of grace and glory: grace was given them in Christ before the world was, and they blessed so soon with spiritual blessings in him; as they are a people afore-prepared for glory, that is, in the purpose of God; so glory is the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; which is no other than a destination, or rather a predestination of that for them, and of them to that, 2 Tim. i. 9. Eph. i. 3, 4. Rom. ix. 23. Matt. xxv. 34. — 6. From the nature of the decrees of God in general, it must appear that this is eternal; for if God's decrees in general are eternal, as has been proved from his fore-knowledge of whatever comes to pass; which is founded upon the certainty of his decrees, that so they shall be; and from his immutability, which could not be established if any new thoughts and resolutions arose in him, or new decrees in time were made by him; and therefore it may be reckoned a sure point, that such a special decree as this, respecting so important an affair as the salvation of all his people, as well as his own glory, must be eternal: and, indeed, the whole scheme of man's salvation by Christ, the fellowship of the mystery hid in him, in which there is such an amazing display of the wisdom of God, is *according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Eph. iii. 9—11. and which is no other than his purpose according to election, or respecting that.

or sense of it, by using the one instead of the other. This doctrine of rejecting some angels and some men from the divine favour, is spoken of but sparingly in scripture, yet clearly and plainly; though chiefly left to be concluded from that of election, and from whence it most naturally and rationally follows.

I. The rejection of some of the angels, which consists of two parts: — 1. A non-election, or preterition of them, a passing over them or passing by them, when others were chosen; and which may be concluded from the choice of others; for if some were elect, others must be non-elect; if some were chosen, others were not; if some were taken, others must be passed by and left: that some of them are elect is certain, they are expressly called *elect angels*, 1 Tim. v. 21. and consequently are distinguished from others who are not elected; or otherwise the title and character of elect must be insignificant and impertinent. Both these were considered alike, upon an equal foot, when the one were elected, and the other not; they were viewed as not yet created and fallen, but as lying in the pure mass of creatureship or creability; God saw in his power what creatures of this kind he could produce into being, as he also saw in his will whom he would; and of those he could and would create, he determined to choose some and leave others, and both for his own glory; for they could not be considered as fallen creatures, or in the corrupt mass, since the elect angels never fell; and the moment they were elected, the others were passed by or rejected; and so must be under the same consideration; and consequently the election of the one, and the rejection of the other, must be wholly owing to the sovereign will of God: both these were brought into being as God determined they should, and are equally his creatures, Psal. civ. 4. and were both made pure and holy creatures, angels of light, bright morning-stars, shining in the purity and holiness of their nature; for such were Satan and his angels in their original creation; the devil, our Lord says, *abode not in the truth*, John viii. 44. which implies that he had been in the truth, though he continued not in it; in his allegiance and fidelity to God his creator; in his integrity, purity and holiness, as a creature of veracity; but framing lies, he became the father of them. What he was in, but abode not in, is the first estate, of integrity, innocence and happiness, in which he was created, but kept it not, Jude 6. To some angels God decreed to give, and did give grace to confirm them in the state in which they were created; these are the elect angels, who are said to be mighty, and to excel in strength; not only in natural, but in spiritual strength. To others he decreed not to give confirming grace, but to deny it to them; and which he was not obliged to give, it being what could not be challenged by the laws and dues of creation, and was mere favour to those on whom it was bestowed; wherefore the others were left to the mutability of their will, which is that weakness and folly the angels were chargeable with in their creation-state, Job iv. 18. hence of their own free-will they sinned and fell, and left their habitation, 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. what their sin was by which they fell, will be considered in course, when we come to the fall of Adam, and of theirs; this leads on to observe the other part of the decree respecting them. — 2. The appointment of them to wrath and damnation; in this they were viewed as sinful, fallen creatures; this decree is meant by their being *reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day*, Jude 6. 2 Pet. ii. 4. for by chains are meant the purposes and decrees of God, by which they are bound and held fast, and from which they cannot loose themselves; and as the decrees of God are called *mountains of brass*, Zech. vi. 1. so they may be called chains of iron and brass for the same reasons, namely, their firmness, immutability and duration; they are everlasting chains, and in these they are reserved under darkness; meaning either the state of darkness in which they are, being deprived of that light and knowledge they had; and also being under horror and black despair, without the least gleam of the light of joy and comfort; or that state of darkness to which they are appointed and reserved, even that blackness of darkness to which the wandering stars, as these may be said to be, are reserved, Jude 13. and moreover they are appointed and reserved to the judgment of the great day, to the great day of the last judgment; when they will be brought forth in chains before the judgment-seat of Christ, and will have their final sentence passed and executed on them which as yet seems not to have been done, Matt. viii. 29. then will Christ sit on the throne of judgment, and saints will stand by, together with the good angels, as approvers of the righteous sentence: and therefore saints are said to *judge angels*, as well as the world of the ungodly, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. that is, the evil angels, to which judgment they are appointed by the decree of God; and to endure eternal wrath and damnation; signified by *everlasting fire, prepared*, in the decrees and purposes of God, *for the devil and his angels*, Matt. xxv. 41.

II. The decree concerning the rejection of some of the sons of men. It may be observed, that we can hear and read of the non-election and rejection of angels, and of their pre-ordination to condemnation and wrath, with very little emotion of the mind: the devils may be cast down to hell, to be everlastingly damned, and be appointed thereunto, and it gives no great concern; no hard thoughts against God arise, no charge of cruelty, want of kindness to his creatures and offspring, and of injustice to them; but if any thing of this kind is hinted at, with respect to any of the apostate sons of Adam, presently there is an outcry against it; and all the above things are suggested. What is the reason of this difference? It can be only this, that the latter comes nearer home, and more nearly affects us; it is partiality to ourselves, our nature and race, to which this is owing; otherwise far greater severity, if it may be so called, is exercised on fallen angels, than on fallen men; for God has not spared one of the angels that sinned, provided no saviour for them, nor so much as given them the means of grace; but consigned them all over at once to everlasting wrath and ruin: whereas, not only a Saviour is provided for fallen men, and means of grace allowed them, but thousands, and ten thousands, millions and millions of them are saved, by the abundant mercy and grace of God, through Christ. But to go on,

1. I shall prove that there is a non-election, or rejection of some of the sons of men, when others were chosen; and, indeed, from the election of some, may fairly be inferred, the non-election of others. Common sense tells us, that of persons or things, if some are chosen, others must be left: if there is a remnant of the sons of men, according to the election of grace, then there are others not included in it, which are left unchosen, and are called the rest. The election, that is, elect men, hath obtained it, righteousness and eternal life; and the rest were blinded, Rom. xi. 5, 7. Our Lord says, *I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen*, John xiii. 18. plainly intimating, that all were not chosen, and it is certain one was not, and whom he calls the son of perdition; one, not only deserving of it, but appointed to it; for though chosen to an office, as an apostle, yet not to grace and glory, John xvii. 12. and how many such there be, no man can pretend to say but; it is evident there are some, and who are generally described by negative characters; as not known by God and Christ; the elect are God's people, whom he knows; they are elect, according to his fore-knowledge; which carries in it love and affection to them; but of others Christ says, I never knew you; he knew them by his omniscience, but not with such knowledge as he knows the elect of God; he never knew them as the objects of his Father's love, and his own; he never knew them as the objects of his Father's choice, and his own; he never knew them in the gift of his Father to him, Matt. vii. 23. hence they are represented as not loved, which is meant by being hated: Esau have I hated; that is, had not loved him, as he had Jacob; for it cannot be understood of positive hatred, for God hates none of his creatures, as such, only as workers of iniquity; but of negative hatred, or of not loving him; which, in comparison of the love he bore to Jacob, might be called hatred: in which sense the word is used in Luke xiv. 26. Moreover, they are spoken of as not being given to Christ; for if there are some that are given to him out of the world, then there must be a world which are not given, and for whom he has not so much concern as even to pray for them, John xvii. 6, 9. they are frequently described, as not having their names written, and not to be found written in the Lamb's book of life, Rev. xiii. 8. and xvii. 8. and xx. 15. Now as election is signified by the writing of names in the book of life, non-election is expressed by not writing the names of some there; and if those whose names are written there, are the elect, then those whose names are not written there, but are left out, must be non-elect: to which may be added, that our Lord says of these persons, *Ye are not of my sheep*, and gives this as a reason why they believe not in him, John x. 19. But the goats he will place on his left hand, pass sentence of condemnation on them, and send them into everlasting punishment, Matt. xxv. 33—46.

Moreover, from the effects of election not having place in some persons, it may be concluded, that there are such who are non-elect. Vocation is a certain fruit and effect of election; *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called,* Rom. viii. 30. not only externally, but internally, with an holy and heavenly calling, to grace here, and glory hereafter. But are all called in this manner? No; there are some who have not so much as the outward call by the ministry of the word, have not the external means of grace; but as they sin without law, perish without it, Rom. x. 14. and ii. 12. These who are chosen, are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ; they are chosen to holiness, and through sanctification of the Spirit. But are all made like to Christ, and conformed to his image? do not many bear the image of Satan, imitate him, and do his lusts? are all men made holy, or have they the sanctification of the Spirit? Whom God predestinates he justifies, by the righteousness of his Son. But are all men justified? No; for though he justifies some of all sorts and nations; as the circumcised Jews by faith, and the uncircumcised Gentiles through faith, yet not every individual; yea, there is a world that will be condemned, and consequently not predestinated to life, 1 Cor. xi. 32. They that are chosen, are predestinated to the adoption of children, and enjoy both the grace and inheritance of children. But are all children and heirs? is there not such a distinction among men, as children of God, and children of the devil; between whom there is, and will be, an eternal difference? 1 John iii. 10. and therefore there must be an election, and a non-election among them. Moreover, whom God has predestinated, or chosen to life and happiness, these he glorifies, Rom. viii. 30. they obtain the glory of Christ, which his Father has given him for them, and to which they are chosen and called, John xvii. 22. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. But are all glorified? do not some go into perdition, even into everlasting punishment? and therefore must be considered as non-elect, Rev. xvii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. To all which may be added, that those that are given to Christ, which is but another phrase for being chosen in him; these, he says, shall come to him, and he will in no wise cast them out; yea, that they are his sheep, whom he must bring to his Father, to himself, to his fold, to grace and glory, John vi. 37. and x. 16. But are there not some whom Christ will drive away from him, and to them say, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,* Matt. vii. 23. and xxv. 41? All this put together most clearly and fully proves, that there are some who are not chosen of God, but rejected by him.

II. The parts of this decree, concerning the rejection of men; these are commonly said to be preterition and pre-damnation.

1. Preterition is God's passing by some men, when he chose others: and in this act, or part of the decree, men are considered as in the pure mass of creatureship, or creability; in which state they are found, when passed by or rejected, and in which they are left, even just as they are found, nothing put into them; but were left in the pure mass, as they lay, and so no injury done them; nor is God to be charged with any injustice towards them: in this act sin comes not into consideration, as it does in a following one; for in this men

are considered as not created, and so not fallen; but as unborn, and having done neither good nor evil, Rom. ix. 11. And this is a pure act of sovereignty in God, and to his sovereign will it is to be ascribed; who has the same sovereign power, and greater, than the potter has over his clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, Rom. ix. 19—22. This being expressed, as before observed, by negative phrases, is, by some, called negative reprobation.

2. Pre-damnation is God's appointment, or pre-ordination of men to condemnation for sin; and is what is spoken of in Jude 4. *There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation*; and who are described by the following characters, *ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and*, or even *our Lord Jesus Christ*; which, when observed, is sufficient to clear this decree of God from the charge of cruelty and injustice: and this, by some, is called, positive reprobation. The word *κριμα*, translated condemnation, in the above-quoted text, some render judgment, and interpret it of judicial blindness and hardness of heart; which appeared in the persons embracing and spreading false and pernicious doctrines spoken of; and this is, indeed, what they are fore-ordained, or appointed to, as a punishment of former sins; for this hardness, &c. presupposes former sins, and an obstinate continued course in them; either against the light and law of nature, which they like not to walk according to, and therefore God gives them up, pursuant to his decree, to a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient, Rom. i. 24, 28. or against divine revelation, precepts, counsels, and admonitions, like Israel of old, hearkening not to the voice of the Lord, in his word, nor paying any regard to his instructions; and therefore he gives them up, as he determined to do, to their own heart's lusts, and to walk in their own counsels, Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12. and this is the sense of the word in John ix. 39. God hardens some men's hearts, as he did Pharaoh's, and he wills so harden them, or he hardens them according to his decreeing will; *Whom he will he hardeneth*, Rom. ix. 18. this he does not by any positive act, by infusing hardness and blindness into the hearts of men; which is contrary to his purity and holiness, and would make him the author of sin: but by leaving men to their natural blindness and hardness of heart; for the understanding is naturally darkened; and there is a natural blindness, hardness, and callousness of heart, through the corruption of nature, and which is increased by habits of sinning; men are in darkness, and choose to walk in it; and therefore God, as he decreed, gives them up to their own wills and desires, and to Satan, the god of the world, they choose to follow, and to be led captive by, who blinds their minds yet more and more, lest light should break in unto them, Eph. iv. 18. Psal. lxxxii. 5. 2 Cor. iv. 4. and also God may be said to harden and blind, by denying them that grace which can only cure them of their hardness and blindness, and which he, of his free favour, gives to his chosen ones, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. but is not obliged to give it to any; and

because he gives it not, he is said to hide, as he determined to hide, the things of his grace from the wise and prudent, even because it so seemed good in his sight, Matt. xi. 25, 26. Hence this blindness, hardness, insensibility, and stupidity, are represented as following upon non-election; not as the immediate effect of it, but as consequences of it; and such as neither judgments nor mercies can remove; and bring persons to a right sense of sin, and repentance for it, Rom. xi. 7—10. The sin and fall of Adam having brought him into a state of infidelity, in which God has concluded him: and he does not think fit to give to every man that grace which can only cure him of his unbelief, and without which, and unless almighty power and grace go along with the means they have, they cannot believe; whereby the decrees, predictions, and declarations of God are fulfilled in them, John xii. 37—40. yea, as Christ is said to be set, or appointed, *for the fall of many in Israel*, Luke ii. 34. so many are appointed to stumble at the Word, at him, the Stone of stumbling, and Rock of offence, being children of disobedience, and left as such; when, to those who are a chosen generation, he is a precious Corner-Stone, and they believe in him, and are saved by him, 1 Pet. ii. 7—6. hence we read of some, who, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, to them are sent by God strong delusions, and they are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned; not that God infuses any delusion or deceit into them, but because of their disbelief of, and disrespect to him and his Word, he suffers their corruptions to break forth and prevail, not giving restraining grace to them; so that they become a prey to them that lie in wait to deceive; and being easy and credulous, they believe lies spoken in hypocrisy; which issue in their damnation; whilst others, beloved of the Lord, and chosen from the beginning to salvation, obtain the glory of Christ, 2 Thess. ii. 10—14. But though all this is a most certain truth, and is contained in the decree we are speaking of, yet condemnation, or everlasting punishment, seems to be meant in the passage quoted; or however, this is what some men are foreordained unto.

Some will have it, that this refers to something forewritten, as they choose to render the word; to some prophecy concerning the condemnation of those persons, and particularly to that of Enoch, verse 14, 15. but it is not certain that that prophecy was ever written; besides, a prophecy, or prediction, of any thing future, is founded upon an antecedent predetermination and appointment; God foretels by his prophets what will be, because he has determined it shall be; if, therefore, the condemnation of those persons was foretold in any written prophecy, it was because God had decreed it should come upon them, or they be brought into it. It seems to have the same sense with God's appointing men unto wrath; which though not in so many words expressed, is manifestly implied; as when the apostle says, *God hath not appointed us to wrath*, who yet were children of wrath, and deserving of it as others; *but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ:* It suggests, that though he had not appointed them, yet he had appointed others to wrath, and who are therefore called, *vessels of wrath*, *fitted for destruction*, by their own sins and transgressions, 1 Thess. v. 9. Rom. ix. 22. With which agrees what is said of some wicked men, who are reserved, in the purposes and decrees of God, to the day of destruction; in consequence of which, they shall be brought to the day of wrath, which God has appointed for the execution of his wrath; and hence the casting of the fury of his wrath, in all the dreadful instances of it, is called, *the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him of God*, Job xxi. 30. and xx. 23—29. and this is the sense of Prov. xvi. 4. for the meaning of the text is not, nor is it our sense of it, as some misrepresent it, as if God made man to damn him; we say no such thing, nor does the text; our sentiment is, that God made man neither to damn nor save him; but he made him for his own glory, and he will be glorified in him, in one way or another: nor that he made man wicked, in order to damn him; for God made man upright; men made themselves wicked, by their own inventions; which are the cause of damnation: but the true sense of the passage is, that the Lord hath made, that is, has appointed all things for himself, for his own glory: and should it be objected, that the wicked could not be for his glory; it is added; Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil; that is, he has appointed the wicked for the day of evil, to suffer justly for their sins to the illustration of the glory of his justice.

III. I proceed to consider the Causes of this act.

1. The efficient cause is God; it is the Lord, that makes all things for his own glory, and the wicked for the day of evil; it is God that appoints to wrath and foreordains to condemnation; what if *God willing to shew his wrath*, &c. Prov. xvi. 4. 1 Thess. v. 9. Rom. ix. 22. And, it is an act of his sovereignty, who does what he pleases in heaven and in earth; he does according to his will in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth; as he does all things, so this, according to the counsel of his will; for though it is sovereign, it is not in such sense arbitrary as to be without reason and wisdom; it is a wise counsel of his, for his own glory. The objector, introduced by the apostle, supposes this, that it is an act of his sovereign will; and therefore says, *Why does he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?* and which the apostle denies not, but reasons upon it, and confirms it, Rom. ix. 19—22. It is agreeable to his justice: the same apostle treating on this subject asks, Is there unrighteousness with God? that is, to love one and hate another, to choose one and not another, before they were born, or had done good or evil; and he answers, God forbid; since in his act of passing by one, when he chose another, he left him as he found him, without putting, or supposing any iniquity in him; without any charge of any sin, or laying him under a necessity to commit any. In the act of pre-damnation, he considers him as a sinner, and foreordains him to punishment for his sins; and if it is no injustice in God to punish men for sin, it cannot be unjust in him to determine to punish for it: if the judgments of God on antichrist are true and righteous, and display his holiness and justice, it cannot be unrighteous in him to decree to inflict these

judgments on him, and his followers, here and hereafter: if it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people, and so to them that commit any other sin, it must be agreeable to his justice to appoint them to indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; even every soul of man that does evil, if he pleases.—Nor is this act contrary to his goodness; all persons and things are his own, and he may do with him as he pleases, without an impeachment of this or any other perfection of his; *Is thine eye evil*, says he, *because I am good?* Matt. xx. 15. What distinguishing grace and goodness has been exercised towards fallen man, when no degree of sparing mercy was shewn to fallen angels? and what goodness has been laid up, and wrought out, for many of the sons of Adam, though others have been rejected? and even on them that are rejected, what riches of providential goodness have been, and are bestowed on them, in the most plentiful and liberal manner? with what lenity, patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, has God *endured the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction*, fitted by themselves? Rom. ii. 4. and ix. 22. This act of God is neither contrary to the mercy, nor to the wisdom of God, nor to the truth and sincerity of God, in his promises, declarations, calls, &c. nor to the holiness and justice of God; as I have elsewhere[a] made abundantly to appear.

2. The moving, or impulsive cause of God's making such a decree, by which he has rejected some of the race of Adam from his favour, is not sin, but the good pleasure of his will: sin is the meritorious cause of eternal death, wrath, and damnation; wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, and ungodliness of men, and comes upon the children of disobedience, whom God leaves in it; the wages, or demerit of sin, is death, even death eternal: but then it is not the impulsive cause of the decree itself; not of preterition, because that, as election, was before good or evil were done, and irrespective of either; nor of pre-damnation, God, indeed, damns no man but for sin; nor did he decree to damn any but for sin; but yet, though sin is the cause of damnation and death, the thing decreed, it is not the cause of the decree itself; it is the cause of the thing willed, but not the moving cause of God's will; for nothing out of God can move his will; if it could, the will of God would be dependent on the will and actions of men; whereas, his purpose, whether with respect to election or rejection, stands not on the works and will of men, but on his own will and pleasure: besides, if sin was the cause of the decree itself, or of God's will to reject men, then all would be rejected, since all fell in Adam; all are under sin, all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; all are, by nature, children of wrath, and deserving of it: what then could move God to choose one and reject another, but his sovereign good will and pleasure? that then is the sole moving and impulsive cause of such a decree; when we have searched the scriptures most thoroughly, and employed our reasoning powers to the highest pitch, and racked our invention to the uttermost; no other cause of

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[a] See the Cause of God and Truth, part 3. chap. 1, 2.

v. The impulsive, or moving cause of this act in God, or what were the notives and and inducements with God to take such a step as this: and these were not, — 1. The good works of men; for this act passed in eternity, before any works were done; *The children not being yet born, neither having done ny good or evil; that the purpose of God, according to election might stand,* Rom. ix. 11. and since this was done before them, they could never be the noving cause of it; they are the fruits and effects of it, and so cannot be the ause of it in any sense: it is owing to electing grace that any good works ave been done by men since the fall of Adam; for what the prophet says of he people of Isarel, is true of the whole world; *Except the Lord of Sabbaoth ad left us a seed,* a remnant, according to the election of grace, a few, whom, ccording to this decree, he makes holy and good, and enables them to perform ood works, *we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah,* Rom. x. 29. should have been like to the inhabitants of those cities, both in sin and unishment; as public and abandoned sinners, given up to the vilest lusts, without any check or restraint. Good works are what God has pre-ordained, hat his chosen ones should walk in them, Eph. ii. 10. and therefore the election of the one, and the pre-ordination of the other, must be previous to them, nd they not the cause of either; the same cannot be both cause and effect, with respect to the same things: besides, there are no good works truly such, efore effectual vocation, which is the fruit of election; before that they have only the appearance of good works, but are not really such, not being done in faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin; nor from love to God, which is he end of the commandment; nor in the name and strength of Christ; nor with a view to the glory of God. Men must be first created in Christ, or be new creatures in him, must be believers in him, and have the Spirit of Christ, nd his grace, put into them, ere they can perform good works: all which are done at effectual vocation, and not before. Moreover, God does not proceed according to men's works; nor are they the moving causes to him, in other acts of his grace; as not in the mission of his Son, 1 John iv. 10. nor in vocation, 2 Tim. i. 9. nor in justification, Rom. iii. 20, 28. nor in the whole of salvation, Tit. iii. 5. Eph. ii. 8, 9. and so not in this first step to salvation, election; for then it would not be of grace, of pure free grace, unmixed and unmerited grace, as it is said to be. And in the strongest manner it is denied to be of works, and that established by an argument which is unanswerable, Rom. xi. 5, 6.—2. Neither is the holiness of men, whether in principle or in practice, or both, the moving cause of election to eternal life; it is an end to which men are chosen; *he hath chosen us in him—that we should be holy,* Eph. i. 4. not because we were holy, but that we might be so, and so denotes something future, and which follows upon it; and it is a means fixed in the decree of election to another end, salvation; to which men are chosen, *through sanctification of the Spirit,* 2 Thess. ii. 13. yea, the sanctification of God's elect is the object of God's decree; is the thing decreed, and so cannot be the cause of the decree;

This is the will of God, even your sanctification, 1 Thess. iv. 3. not barely the approving will of God, as being agreeable to his holy nature and holy law; nor merely the will of his precept, Be ye holy; but his decreeing will, or determinate counsel, that men should be holy: besides, holiness in principle and practice, does not take place until effectual vocation, and is the work of the Spirit of God in time, who calls men with an holy calling; not only to holiness, but works a principle of grace and holiness in them, whereby they are influenced and enabled, under the power of his grace, to live soberly, righteously, and godly.—3. Nor is faith the moving cause of election; the one is in time, the other in eternity: whilst men are in a state of unregeneracy, they are in a state of unbelief; they are, as without hope in God, so without faith in Christ; and when they have it, they have it not of themselves, of their own power and free-will; but they have it as the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, flowing purely from his grace; and therefore cannot be the cause of electing grace: besides, it is the effect of that, it is a consequence that follows upon it, and is insured by it; *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*, Acts xiii. 48. it is proper and peculiar to the elect of God; the reason why some men do not believe is, because they are not of Christ's sheep, John x. 26. his elect, given him by the Father; and the reason why others do believe is, because they are of Christ's sheep, or his chosen ones, and therefore faith is given to them, which is called, *the faith of God's elect*, Tit. i. 1. Faith is not the cause of vocation, and much less of election, which precedes that: the reason why men are called, is not because they believe, but they are called that they might believe; in which effectual call faith is given to them, as the evidence of their election. Once more, faith is fixed as a means, in the decree of election; and therefore cannot be the cause of it, 2 Thess. ii. 13. To which may be added, if faith is the moving cause of election, men might be said rather to choose God and Christ, at least first, than they to choose him; whereas our Lord says, *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you*, John xv. 16. the apostles had chosen him, but not first; he first chose them; so that their choice of him had no influence on his choice of them: but if faith is the moving cause of election, then men rather choose Christ than he them; for what is faith but an high esteem of Christ, a choosing and preferring him, as a Saviour to all others? a choosing that good part which shall never be taken away; and of the way of truth, or of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.—4. Nor is perseverance in faith, holiness, and good works, the moving cause of election; but the effect of it, and what is ensured by it: the reason why men persevere is, because they are the elect of God, who cannot be deceived totally and finally, so as to have their faith subverted, and overthrown, as that of nominal professors may be; because the foundation on which they are, stands sure: sealed with this seal, *The Lord knows them that are his*, Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19. Should it be said, that it is the foresight of these things in men, which moves God to choose them; it may be replied, that God's foresight or fore-knowledge of things future, is founded on the determinations of his will concerning them; God foresees, or foreknows, that such and such a man will believe, become holy, do good works, and persevere therein to glory; because he has determined to give faith to them, work holiness in them, enable them to perform good works, and cause them to persevere therein to the end, and so be saved; and what is this, but the doctrine contended for? it is no other than a decree to give grace and glory to some persons for his own glory, and to deny them to others.

The truth of all this might be illustrated and confirmed by the case of infants dying in infancy; who, as soon as they are in the world, almost, are taken out of it. Now such a number as they are, can never be thought to be brought into being in vain, and without some end to be answered; and which, no doubt, is the glory of God, who is and will be glorified in them, some way or another, as well as in adult persons: now though their election is a secret to us, and unrevealed; it may be reasonably supposed, yea, in a judgment of charity it may rather be concluded, that they are all chosen, than that none are; and if it is allowed that any of them may be chosen, it is enough to my present purpose; since the election of them cannot be owing to their faith, holiness, obedience, good works, and perseverance, or to the foresight of these things, which do not appear in them.

In short, these maxims are certainly true, and indisputable, that nothing in time can be the cause of what was done in eternity; to believe, to be holy, to do good works, and persevere in them, are acts in time, and so cannot be causes of election, which was done in eternity; and that nothing out of God can be the cause of any decree, or will in him; he is no passive Being, to be wrought upon by motives and inducements without him; for if his will is moved by any thing without him, that must be superior to him, and his will must become dependent on that; which to say of God, is to speak very unworthily of him. God wills things because it so pleases him: predestination is according to the good pleasure of his will; election is according to his fore-knowledge; which is no other than his free favour and good will to men, Eph. i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 2. no other reason can be given of God's will or decree to bestow grace and glory on men, for his own glory, and of his actual donation of them, but what our Lord gives; *Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight*, Matt. xi. 25, 26.

VI. The means fixed in the decree of election, for the execution of it, or in order to bring about the end intended, are next to be enquired into; which are, the principal of them, the mediation of Christ, and redemption by, him the sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. The mediation of Christ; Christ, as God, is the efficient cause of election; in his office-capacity, as an Head, the elect are chosen in him, as members of him; and though his mediation, bloodshed, sufferings and death, are not the meritorious cause of election, yet Christ in them is the medium of the execution of it; that is, of bringing the chosen ones, through grace, to glory; whereby God is glorified, and so the end of it is answered: men are said to be chosen *unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 2. which words, though they seem to express the ends of election, yet are such as have the nature of means, in order to further ends, the salvation of men, and the glory of God therein. Obedience may intend the obedience of Christ, both active and passive, or his subjection to the law, and fulfilment of it, both with respect to its precepts and penalty, by which men are justified in the sight of God, and so are entitled to eternal life and happiness; and to the blood of Jesus Christ are owing, the redemption of men, the remission of their sins, and the atonement of them, which issue in their salvation, and make way for the glorifying of the justice of God, as well as the grace of God in it: and the sprinkling of this blood, denotes an application of it to the conscience, whereby it is purged from dead works, and the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; and which speaks peace, and yields comfort, and causes the soul to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Moreover, men are chosen to salvation, *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*, as means to that end, 2 Thess. ii. 13. The *sanctification of the Spirit* is the work of grace on the heart, begun in regeneration, and carried on by the Spirit, until it is perfected by him; and this is necessary to salvation; for without holiness, even perfect holiness, no man shall see the Lord; and therefore it is fixed as a means of it, and is made as sure and certain by the decree of election, as the end, salvation itself; and being fixed as a mean, in this decree, confirms what has been observed, that it cannot be the cause of it: and this proves that the doctrine of election can be no licentious doctrine, but a doctrine according to godliness; since it makes such sure provision for holiness, as well as for happiness. Belief of the truth may signify, not a bare belief of the gospel, and the truths of it; for though they are to be believed by all the saved ones, yet this may be where neither election, nor vocation, nor sanctification, ever take place; even in reprobates, and devils themselves: but faith in Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and believing in him with the heart, unto righteousness, and with which salvation is connected, and to which it is necessary, and is a mean of it; and which being fixed in the decree of election, as such is secured by it, and certainly follows upon it.

VII. The ends settled in the decree of election are both subordinate and ultimate; the subordinate ones have indeed the nature of means with respect to the ultimate one: there are many things to which the elect of God, predestinated or chosen, both with respect to grace and glory, which are subordinate to the grand end, the glory of God. So God is said to predestinate them to be conformed to the image of his Son, to be made like unto him, not so much in his sonship, nor in his sufferings, as in his holiness: man was made after the image of God, this by sinning he came short of; in regeneration the image of Christ is enstamped, the lines of his grace are drawn upon, and he himself is formed in the hearts of his people; and into which image they are more and more changed through transforming views of his glory; and which will be complete in the future state, when saints will see him as he is; and to this they are predestinated, and that in order to another end, that Christ *might be the first-born among many brethren*; the brethren are the predestinated ones, who are brethren to each other; and these are many, the many sons Christ brings to glory; and he is the first-born among them; and that he may appear to be so, he is set up as the pattern of them, to whose image they are predestinated to be conformed, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, Rom. viii. 29. moreover they are said to be *predestinated to the adoption of children*, Eph. i. 5. which may be understood either of the grace of adoption, the blessing itself, which predestination to it is no other than a preparation of it in the purposes and decrees of God, in his council and covenant, 2 Cor. vi. 18. or the inheritance adopted to, which they obtain in Christ, being predestinated to it according to a divine purpose, Eph. i. 11. likewise they are chosen to be *holy and without blame*, Eph. i. 4 even to unblameable holiness, which is begun in this life and perfected in the other; when they will appear before the throne in the sight of God without fault, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: also they are said to be chosen unto faith; *God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith*; James ii. 5. not that they were, or were considered rich in faith when God chose them, but he chose them to be rich in faith, as the words may be supplied, as well as to be heirs of the kingdom; and this end is always answered, such as are chosen do believe; *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*, Acts xiii. 48. Once more, the elect are chosen to obedience and good works; the text in 1 Pet. i. 2. which has been already observed, will bear to be interpreted of the obedience of the elect, in consequence both of their election and their sanctification; and certain it is, that good works are what *God has before ordained* that his elect ones *should walk in them*, Eph. ii. 10. these are subordinate ends which respect grace, and are in order to a farther end, glory and happiness, which is sometimes expressed by salvation; *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Thess. v. 9. and again, *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. salvation was fixed upon, and the method of it contrived in eternity; Christ was sent into the world, and came to effect it; he is become the author of it by his obedience and sufferings; this is not only published in the gospel, but it is applied to God's elect in conversion: but the full enjoyment of it is yet to come, Rom. xiii. 11. the saints are now heirs of it, are kept unto it, and Christ will appear to put them into the possession of it, and to this they are chosen, 1 Pet. i. 2, 5. Heb. i. 14. and ix. 28. this end is also expressed by eternal life, *As many as were ordained to eternal life*, Acts xiii. 48. this is begun in grace now, which is a well of living water springing up to it; he that believes has it already in some sense; the knowledge of God and Christ is the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it; and it will lie hereafter in a life of perfect knowledge and holiness, and in uninterrupted communion with God to all eternity; and to this the elect are ordained.

Now all these ends, both respecting grace and glory, are subordinate ones to the grand and ultimate end of all, the glory of God; for as God swears by himself, because he could swear by no greater, so because a greater end could not be proposed than his own glory, he has set up that as the supreme end of all his decrees; he has made, that is, has appointed, *all things for himself*, for his own glory, Prov. xvi. 4. as all things are from him, as the first cause, they are all to him as the last end, Rom. xi. 36. and with respect to the decree of election, it is the glory of his grace mixed with justice, which is the end of it; the election of men to unblameable holiness, and the predestination of them to the adoption of children, are said to be *to the praise of the glory of his grace*, Eph. i. 4—6. that his free and sovereign grace might be displayed and glorified thereby; and that men, who are the chosen generation and peculiar people, might shew forth the praises of it; as they do in part now, and will do it perfectly hereafter; for they are a people he has formed for himself, both in election and effectual vocation, for this end and purpose, Isai. xliii. 21. 1 Pet. ii 9. his great end in election is to *make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of his mercy*; that is, the riches, the fulness and plenty of his glorious and sovereign grace and mercy on the objects of it, Rom. ix. 23. and not the glory of his grace and mercy only, but of his justice also; for which provision is made in the decree of the means, by setting forth, or pre-ordaining, Christ *to be the propitiation*, or to make atonement, *for sin*; *to declare his righteousness*, the justice of God, *that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus*, Rom. iii. 25, 26. and so the glory of God, of his justice and holiness, as well as of his grace and mercy, appear to be great in the salvation of men; here mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other; and God is glorified in all his perfections, which is the great end in view.

VIII. The blessings and benefits flowing from election are many, indeed all spiritual blessings; it is as it were the rule, measure, and standard according to which they are communicated; the several chains in man's salvation are connected with it, and hang and depend upon it, Eph. i. 3, 4. Rom, viii. 30. they need only be just named in order, since they have been suggested under the former heads. — 1. Vocation. Whom he did predestinate, them he called; all the predestinated, or chosen ones, are in time called, and are called according to the eternal purpose and grace of God in election, Rom. viii. 30. 2 Tim. i. 9. — 2. Faith and holiness, and indeed every grace of the Spirit. Holiness is both an end and a mean in this decree, as before observed, and made certain by it; faith follows upon it as a free gift of grace, and so hope and love, and every other grace. — 3. Communion with God. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee*, Psal. lxv. 4. to come into his presence, and enjoy it in his house, his word, and ordinances. — 4. Justification; which is secretly a branch of it, and openly as to the manifestation of it, flows from it; *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth*; that is, the elect; who because they are chosen in Christ, they are justified in him, Rom. viii. 33. — 5. Adoption; to which the elect are predestinated, and are denominated the children of God, being given to Christ as such when chosen in him, before the incarnation of Christ, redemption by him, or having the Spirit from him, Heb. ii. 13, 14. John xi. 52. Gal. iv. 6. — 6. Glorification; *Whom he did predestinate — them he glorified*, Rom. viii. 30. the elect, the vessels of mercy, are afore prepared for glory, for eternal glory and happiness; and are chosen and called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ, which the Father has given to him to bestow upon them, and which they will most certainly enjoy, Rom. ix. 23. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.

IX. The several properties of election may be gathered from what has been said of it; as, — 1. That it is eternal; it does not commence upon believing, and much less at perseverance in faith and holiness; but it was an act in God before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. — 2. It is free and sovereign; God was not obliged to choose any: and as it is, he chooses whom he will, and for no other reason excepting his own glory, but because he will; *what if God willing, &c.* and the difference in choosing one and not another is purely owing to his will, Rom. ix. 18—23. — 3. It is absolute and unconditional; clear of all motives in man, or conditions to be performed by him; for it stands not of works, but of him that calleth, the will of him that calls, Rom. ix. 11. — 4. It is complete and perfect; it is not begun in eternity and completed in time, nor takes its rise from the will of God, and is finished by the will of man; nor is made perfect by faith, holiness, obedience, and persevering in well doing, but has its complete being in the will of God at once. — 5. It is immutable and irrevocable; God never repents of, nor revokes the choice he has made; some choose their friends and favourites, and alter their minds and choose others; but God is in one mind, and never makes any alteration in the choice he has made; and hence their state is safe and secure. — 6. It is special and particular; that is, those who are chosen are chosen to be a special people above all others, and are particular persons, whose names are written in the book of life; not in general, men of such and such characters, but persons well known to God, and distinctly fixed on by him. — 7. Election may be known by the persons, the objects of it; partly by the blessings flowing from it, and connected with it, before observed, bestowed upon them; for to whomsoever such blessings of grace are applied, they must be the elect of God, Rom. viii. 30. they may know it from the efficacy of the gospel upon them, in their vocation and conversion, 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. and by the Spirit of God testifying their adoption to them, to which they are predestinated, Rom. viii. 15, 16. and they may be able to make it known to others by their holy lives and conversations; which is meant by making their calling and election sure, even by their good works, as some copies read, 2 Pet. i. 10. since both calling and election are to be made sure, and therefore by some third thing: indeed no man can know his election of God until he is called; it would be presumption in him to claim this character, until he is born again, nor should any man conclude himself a reprobate because a sinner, since all men are sinners; even God's elect, who are by nature, and in no wise better than others, but children of wrath, even as others.

There are many things objected to this doctrine of election; but since it is so clear and plain from scripture, and is written as with a sun-beam in it, all objections to it must be mere cavil. It is urged, that God is said to be *good to all, and his tender mercies over all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 9. which seems inconsistent with his choosing some and leaving others; but this is to be understood not of his special grace, but of his providential goodness, which extends to the elect and non-elect, the evil and the good, the just and the unjust, Matt. v. 45. and in this sense he is the saviour, preserver, and bountiful benefactor of all men, but especially of them that believe, 1 Tim. iv. 10. It is observed that Christ says he was sent not to condemn the world, but that the world through him may be saved, and therefore not some only but all; but to understand this of all the individuals in the world is not true, because all are not saved; and so this end of Christ's mission, so understood, is not answered; but by the world is meant the world of God's elect, whom he was reconciling in Christ, and for whom Christ gave his life, and became the propitiation for their sins, even for all the chosen throughout the whole world, and particularly among the Gentiles. Nor is 1 Tim. ii. 4. any objection to this doctrine, *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*; for all men are not eventually saved, nor do all come to the knowledge of the truth of the gospel; nor indeed have all the means of that knowledge: but the sense is, either, that all that are saved, God wills to be saved; or that it is his will that men of all sorts and of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, should be saved; which agrees with the context 1, 2, 7. And when it is said of God, that he is *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. this must be interpreted, not of all mankind, but of the elect, to whom this and the preceding epistle are inscribed, and who are in 8. stiled believed, and in this verse, the us towards whom God is long-suffering; now it is the will and pleasure of God that none of those should perish, but all in due time be brought to faith in Christ, and to repentance towards God: but objections from hence, with others of the like kind, are not sufficient to overturn this truth, so abundantly established in the sacred scriptures.

OF THE DECREE OF REJECTION, OF SOME ANGELS, AND OF SOME MEN.

I MAKE use of the word rejection in this article, partly because it is a scriptural phrase and ascribed to God, and partly because it is that act of God which gives the name of reprobate to any; and it is the foundation of that character, *reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them*, Jer. vi. 30. and stands opposed to election, 1 Sam. xv. 26. and x. 24. but chiefly because the other word reprobation, through wrong and frightful ideas being affixed to it, carries in it with many a sound harsh and disagreeable meaning; or otherwise they are of the same signification and no amendment is made in the doctrine

God's procedure in this affair can be assigned, but what Christ has expressed; *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*; as to hide the things of his grace and gospel from some, and reveal them to others; so to decree and determine within himself, to act in this manner, Matt. xi. 25, 26.

3. The final cause, or end of this decree, is his own glory; this is the ultimate nd of all his decrees and appointments, and so of this, appointing the wicked or the day of evil; it was for this purpose he raised up Pharaoh, and decreed all e did concerning him, that he might shew his power in him, his sovereignty nd dominion over him, and that his name and glory might be declared throughut all the earth: and the same view he has with respect to all the vessels of rath, namely, to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, in their de-ruction, which is of themselves; it is not the death and damnation of the sin-er, in which he delights not, that is his ultimate end; it is his own glory, the lory of his perfections, and particularly the glory of his justice and holiness, rov. xvi. 4. Rom. ix. 17, 22.

IV. The date of this decree is as ancient as eternity itself; wicked men are *efore of old* said to be *ordained to condemnation*, Jude 4. Some who would ave the word rendered, before written, as already observed, suppose the text efers to a written prophecy, concerning the condemnation of those men, and hat regard is had to a parallel place in 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. So Grotius. But if ude had had that in his view, he would never have said that they were of old, long time ago, before written, and prophesied of; since, according to the common calculation, that epistle of Peter was written in the same year that this f Jude's was: the date of election and rejection must be the same; Esau was ated, as early as Jacob was loved, or rejected when he was chosen; and both were done before they were born. If men were chosen from the beginning, hat is, from eternity, to salvation; then those that were not chosen, or not ordained to eternal life, were foreordained as early to condemnation; and so is he Syriac version of the text in Jude, *were from the beginning ordained*; the same date that is given of election in 2 Thess. ii. 13. And, indeed, there can be no new decree, appointment or purpose, made by God in time; if the decree of election was from eternity, that of rejection must be so too; since there cannot e one without the other; if some were chosen before the foundation of the world, others must be left, or passed by, as early; and, indeed, those whose names are left out of the book of life, are expressly said to be *not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world*, Rev. xvii. 8. And from the whole,

V. The properties of this decree will appear to be much the same with those of the decree of election, and need be but just mentioned: as, — 1. That it is an eternal decree of God. This did not arise in the mind of God in time, as no new act does, but was made before the foundation of the world. — 2. That it is free and sovereign, owing to his own will and pleasure, not moved to it by any thing out of himself; *He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*, Rom. ix. 18. and so he determined to do. — 3. It is immutable and irrevocable; it is expressed by a decree, a pre-ordination? all the decrees of God are unalterable, there is an immutability in his counsel, let it be concerning what it may. Is it expressed by a writing or a forewriting, as in Jude 4? It is such a writing as ever remains in full force. Did Pilate say, *what I have written, I have written*, signifying it should remain without any alteration? John xix. 22. Then it may be concluded, that what God has written shall remain, and never be revoked; for he is in one mind, and none can turn him. — 4. It is of particular persons; it does not merely respect events, characters, and actions; but the persons of men; as they are persons who are chosen in Christ, and appointed, not to wrath, but to obtain salvation by him; so they are persons who are fore-ordained to condemnation, whose names are left out of the book of life, whilst others are written in it. — 5. It is a most just and righteous decree; and no other but such can be made by God, who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

OF THE ETERNAL UNION OF THE ELECT OF GOD UNTO HIM.

THE union of God's elect unto him, their adoption by him, justification before him, and acceptance with him, being eternal, internal and immanent acts in God; I know not where better to place them, and take them into consideration, than next to the decrees of God, and particularly the decree of election; since as that flows from the love of God, and is in Christ from everlasting, there must of course be an union to him so early; and since predestination to the adoption of children, and acceptance in the beloved, are parts and branches of it, Eph. i 4—6. they must be of the same date. I shall begin with the union of God's elect in Christ.

I shall not here treat of any time-acts of union; as of our nature to the Son of God by his incarnation, when he became our brother, our near kinsman, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; and we and he were of one, that is, of one nature, Heb. ii. 11—16. nor of the vital union of our persons to him in regeneration, when we are quickened by the power and grace of God, Christ is formed in our hearts, and we become new creatures in him, and are in him as living fruitful branches in him, the living vine; which is our open being in Christ, in consequence of a secret being in him from everlasting by electing grace; see Rom. xvi. 7. 2 Cor. v. 17. and xii. 2. Nor of the more open and manifest union of the saints to God hereafter; who being once in Christ, are always found in him; die in union to him, rise from the dead by virtue of that union; and who will then, in soul and body, be one in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; whose union to

e another is the pattern and exemplar of theirs; and for the open manifesta-
n of which Christ prays, John xvii. 21, 23.

But I shall consider the union of the elect to God, as it is in its original, and
an eternal immanent act in God; and which is no other than the going forth
his heart in love to them, and thereby uniting them to himself; which love,
it is from everlasting, Jer. xxxi. 3. John xvii. 23, 24. so it is of a cementing
l uniting nature; and, indeed, is the bond of union between God and his
sen people, or that by which he has taken them into near union with him-
f: love is the bond of union among men, of friendship one to another; it
s this which knit the soul of Jonathan to the soul of David, so that he loved
n as his own soul; it is the bond of the saints union to each other; their
urts are knit together in love: hence charity, or love, is called, the bond of
fectness, or the perfect bond, which joins and keeps them together, Col. ii.
and iii. 14. It was love which so closely cemented the hearts of the first
ristians to one another, insomuch that the multitude of them were *of one heart*
d of one soul, Acts iv. 32. And now love must operate infinitely more strong-
in the heart of God, attracting and uniting the objects of it to himself, giving
m such a nearness and union to him which cannot be dissolved; nothing
n separate from the love of God; not the fall of God's elect in Adam; nor
ir actual sins and transgressions in a state of unregeneracy; nor their revolt-
gs and backslidings after conversion, Rom. viii. 38, 39. Eph. ii. 3, 4.
os. xiv. 4. This bond of union is indissoluble by the joint power of men
d devils. In virtue of this, the people of God become a part of himself, a
ar, dear, and tender part, even as the apple of his eye; have a place in his
art, are engraven on the palms of his hands, and ever on his thoughts; the
sires and affections of his soul are always towards them, and he is ever devis-
g and forming schemes for their welfare; how great is his goodness which
has laid up and wrought for them! Zech. ii. 8. Psal. cxxxix. 17. Cant. vii.
). Isai. xlix. 16. Psal. xxxi. 19.

The love of Christ to the elect, is as early as that of his Father's love to him
d them, and which, it seems, was a love of complacency and delight; for
fore the world was his *delights were with the sons of men,* John xv. 9. Prov.
iii. 30, 31. and this is of the same cementing and uniting nature as his Fa-
er's; it is this which causes him to stick closer than a brother to his people;
nd nothing can separate from his love to them, any more than from the love
f the father; having loved his own, he loves them to the end. This bond of
nion remains firm and sure, and gives such a nearness to him the church
ished for; *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm,* Cant.
iii. 6. see Prov. xviii. 24. Rom. viii. 35. The same may be said of the love
f the Spirit; for it is the everlasting love of God, Father, Son, and Spirit,
which is the bond of the union of God's elect to the sacred three; they have all
hree loved the elect with an everlasting love; and thereby have firmly and ever-

lastingly united them to themselves; and hence because of the Spirit's love of them, and union to them, he, in time, becomes the Spirit of life and grace in them, Rom. xv. 30. Now of this love-union there are several branches, or which are so many illustrations and confirmations of it, and all in eternity; as,

1. An election-union in Christ: this flows from the love of God, *electio præsupponit dilectionem*, election presupposes love; see Thess. ii. 13. particularly persons are said to be chosen in Christ, as Rufus, Rom. xvi. 13. and the apostle says of himself and others, that God had chosen them in Christ, and that before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. Election gives a being in Christ, a kind of subsistence in him; though not an *esse actu*, an actual being, yet at least an *esse representativum*, a representative being; even such an one as that they are capable of having grants of grace made to them in Christ, and of being blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and that before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. Eph. i. 3, 4. and how they can be said to have a being in Christ, and yet have no union to him, I cannot conceive. Besides, in election there is a near relation commences between Christ and the elect; he is given to be an head to them, and they are given as members to him; and as such they are chosen together, he first in order of nature, as the head; and then they as members of him; nothing is more common with sound divines than to express themselves in this manner, when speaking of the election of Christ, and his people in him; particularly says Dr Goodwin[b], "as in the womb, head and members are not conceived apart, but together, as having relation to each other, so were we and Christ (as making up one mystical body to God) formed together in the eternal womb of election." And in the same place he says, "Jesus Christ was the head of election, and of the elect of God: and so in order of nature elected first, though in order of time we were elected together; in the womb of election he, the head, came out first, and then we, the members." Now what relation can well be thought of nearer, or more expressive of a close union, than this of head and members? Christ is the chosen head of the church, the church the chosen body of Christ, the fulness of him that fills all in all, Eph. i. 22, 23. hence is the safety and security of the saints, being in Christ through electing grace, and united to him; and therefore said to be preserved in him; herein and hereby put into his hand, made the sheep of his hand, out of whose hands none can pluck them, nor they ever fall, Jude 1.

II. There is a conjugal union between Christ and the elect, which also flows from love, and commenced in eternity. By the institution of natural marriage, the persons between whom it is contracted become one flesh, as did Adam and Eve; and a nearer union than this cannot well be conceived of; whose marriage was a shadow and representation of that between Christ and his church; whom having espoused, he nourishes and cherishes as his own flesh: and they become one, and have one and the same name, Christ, that is, Christ mystical,

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[b] Works, vol. 1. part 1. p. 62.

Ephes. v. 29—32. 1 Cor. xii. 12. Now though the open marriage-relation between Christ and particular persons takes place at conversion, which is the day of their espousals to him, Jer. ii. 2. and the more public notification of it will be when all the elect of God are gathered in, and shall in one body be as a bride adorned for her husband, and the marriage of the Lamb shall be come; and this declared in the most open manner, and the nuptials solemnized most magnificently, Rev. xxi. 2. Yet the secret act of betrothing was in eternity, when Christ, being in love with the chosen ones, asked them of his Father to be his spouse and bride; and being given to him, he betrothed them to himself in loving kindness, and from thenceforward looked on them as standing in such a relation to him; and which is the foundation of all other after-acts of grace unto them: hence, because of his marriage-relation to his church, he became her surety, and gave himself for her, shed his precious blood to sanctify and cleanse her from all the impurities of the fall, and other transgressions; that he might present her to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; even just such a church, and in such glory he had viewed her in, when he first betrothed her, Eph. v. 25—27. So with the Jews there was a private betrothing before open marriage, and the consummation of it; at which betrothing the relation of husband and wife commenced, Deut. xxii. 23, 24. and so Christ is said to be the husband of the Gentile church before she was in actual being, Isai. liv. 5.

III. There is a federal union between Christ and the elect, and they have a covenant-subsistence in him as their head and representative. The covenant flows from, and is the effect of the love, grace, and mercy of God; these are spoken of along with it as the foundation of it, Psal. lxxxix. 2, 3, 33, 34. Isai. liv. 10. hence it is commonly called the covenant of grace, and this was made from everlasting; Christ was set up as the mediator of it, and his goings forth in it were so early, Prov. viii. 23. Mic. v. 2. eternal life was promised before the world began, and blessings of grace so soon provided, Tit. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 9. all which proves the antiquity of this covenant, of which more hereafter. Now this covenant was made with Christ not as a single person, but as a common head; not for himself, or on his own account only, but for and on account of his people; as the covenant of works was made with Adam, as the federal head of all his posterity; hence he is said to be the figure or type of him that was to come, Rom. v. 14. so the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the federal head of his spiritual offspring; and for this reason a parallel is ran between them in Rom. v. and 1 Cor xv. as if they had been the only two men in the world, the one called the first, and the other the second man. Christ represented his people in this covenant, and they had a representative union to him in it; all that he promised and engaged to do, he promised and engaged in their name and on their account; and when performed it was the same with God, as if it had been done by them; and what he received, promises and blessings of grace, he received in their name, and they received them in him, being one with him as their common head and representative.

IV. There is a legal union between Christ and the elect, the bond of which is his suretyship for them, flowing from his strong love and affection to them. In this respect Christ and they are one in the eye of the law, as the bondsman and debtor are one in a legal sense; so that if one of them pays the debt bound for, it is the same as if the other did. Christ is the surety of the better testament; he drew nigh to God, gave his bond, laid himself under obligation to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for their sins; who being as such accepted of by God, he and they were considered as one; and this is the ground and foundation of his payment of their debts, of his making satisfaction for their sins, of the imputation of their sins to him, and of the imputation of his righteousness to them. In short, it is the saints antecedent union and relation to Christ in eternity, in the several views of it in which it has been considered, which is the ground and reason of all that Christ has done and suffered for them, and not for others; and of all the blessings of grace that are or shall be bestowed upon them, and which are denied to others: the reason why he became incarnate for them, and took upon him human nature with a peculiar regard to them, was because they were children given to him; and why he laid down his life for them, because they were his sheep; and why he gave himself for them, because they were his church; and why he saved them from their sins, because they were his people. Heb. ii. 13, 14. John x. 14, 15. Eph. v. 25. Matt. i. 21. In a word, union to Christ is the first thing, the first blessing of grace flowing from love and effected by it; and hence is the application of all others; *of him are ye in Christ Jesus*, first loved and united to Christ, and then it follows, *who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. So Dr. Goodwin observes, that "union with Christ is the first fundamental thing of justification and sanctification and all: Christ first takes us, and then sends his Spirit; he apprehends us first; it is not my being regenerate that puts me into a right of all these privileges; but it is Christ takes me, and then gives me his Spirit, faith, holiness, &c."

OF OTHER ACTS OF GOD, PARTICULARLY ADOPTION AND JUSTIFICATION.

I SHALL not here treat of these as doctrines, in the full extent of them: or as blessings of grace actually bestowed upon, and enjoyed by believers, with all the privileges and advantages arising from thence; or as transient acts passing on them, and terminating in their consciences at believing; but as internal and immanent acts, taken up in the mind of God from eternity, and which abide in his will; in which they have their complete *esse*, or being, as eternal election has, being of the same kind and nature, and are ranked with it as of the same date, and as branches of it, Eph. i. 4—6. In the other view of them they will be considered hereafter in course, in a proper place. I shall begin,

I. With Adoption; as predestination to it stands next to election, Eph. i. 5. which is no other than his will to adopt the chosen ones, which is his adoption of them; for as the will of God to elect any is his election of them, so his will to adopt the same is his adoption of them; and the complete essence of it lies in his will, and is as such an eternal immanent act of it; in like manner as election is, and may be considered as a branch of it, at least of the same nature with it; and which agrees with the sense of the word *adopto*, from whence adoption comes, which is compounded of *ad* to, and *opto* to choose; so that adoption is God's choice or election of some to be his children; and by this option, or choice, of his they become so. The Greek word for adoption throughout the New Testament is υιοθεσια, which signifies *putting among the children*; the phrase used by God, Jer. iii. 19. *How shall I put them among the children?* or a putting one for and in the room of a son, that is a stranger and not a son by birth; a constituting and accounting such an one as a son, according to choice, will and pleasure: and divine adoption is an act of the sovereign grace and good-will of God, Eph. i. 5. to which he is not induced by any motive out of himself; not by any excellency in the creature; nor for want of a son; one or other of which is the case in human adoptions; as of Moses, a goodly child, by Pharaoh's daughter: and of Esther, a beautiful person, and a relation, by Mordecai; but divine adoption is of persons exceeding unworthy and undeserving, nothing engaging in them; not only strangers, but children of wrath even as others, and like the wretched infant in Ezek. xvi. It is an act of distinguishing grace; it is of men, and not angels; who are servants and not sons, at least not by adoption, and of some men and not of all, though all are alike in their nature-state; and it is a most amazing act of unmerited love and free-grace, 1 John iii. 1.

1. It did not begin in time, but commenced from eternity; it is an act of God's will, and has its complete essence in it; and the will of God is eternal, no new will, nor any new act of will, arises in God in time; or otherwise he would not be the unchangeable God he is.

1. It is an act that does not first take place at believing; indeed the saints are *all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*, openly and manifestatively, Gal. iii. 26. but then it is not faith that makes them children, but what makes them appear to be so; adoption is the act of God, and not of faith; it is God that says, *How shall I put them among the children?* and again, *I will be their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters*, Jer. iii. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 18. it is the work and business of faith to receive the blessing of adoption, which it could not do, unless it had been previously provided in the mind and by the will of God, and in the covenant of his grace; for the reception of which Christ has made way by his redemption, one end of which is *that we might receive the adoption of sons*, Gal. iv. 5. that is, by faith; for God has appointed faith to be the general receiver of Christ, and of all the blessings of grace through him, and this among the rest; and to as many as receive Christ, he gives εξουσιαν, a

power, authority, dignity, and privilege to become the sons of God openly; that is, to claim this as their privilege and dignity; which claim is made by faith; but not the thing itself claimed; even to them that believe on his name, and who are described as regenerate persons; which is an evidence of their sonship, though not the thing itself; *who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God*, John i. 12, 13. But though this describes such who are the sons of God openly, and who believe; yet, — 2. Adoption does not first commence at regeneration; adoption and regeneration are two distinct blessings, and the one is previous to the other; though they are commonly confounded together by divines. Regeneration is not the foundation of adoption, but adoption the foundation of regeneration; or, the reason why men are adopted, is not because they are regenerated, but they are regenerated because they are adopted. By adoption they are put into the relation of children, and by regeneration they have a nature given them suitable to that relation; and are made partakers of the divine nature, that they may be made known to be heirs apparent to, and to have a meetness for the possession, enjoyment, and use of it, the inheritance in heaven they are adopted to; for, — 3. The act of adoption is previous to any work of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of his people; Because ye are sons, sons already, sons by adopting grace; God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, both to convince, convert, regenerate, and effectually call by his grace, and sanctify, and also to comfort, and to enable to cry Abba Father, witnessing to their spirits, that they are the children of God; and hence he is called, the Spirit of adoption: and it is his influences, teachings, and leadings, which are the evidences of adoption; For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; not that those influences, operations, and leadings, make them, but make them evident to be such, Gal. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 14—16. — 4. Divine adoption, or sonship took place before any work of Christ was wrought in time, for any of the sons of men; it was before his incarnation and birth; forasmuch then, or because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, the children of God, who are so by adopting grace; therefore he also, Christ, himself took part of the same; for though the nature he assumed was what was in common to all mankind, yet he assumed it with a peculiar view to the children of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham; whose nature he is said to take, and for whose sake he was the Child born, and the Son given, Isai. ix. 6. Heb. ii. 14, 16. and in consequence they must be the children of God before Christ suffered and died, and, indeed, he suffered and died for them under this character, considered as the children of God by adopting grace; for he died not only for the elect of God among the Jews, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad; that is, those who were already the children of God by adopting grace, who were scattered throughout the whole Gentile world. This relates to the gathering of all the elect in one, in Christ, in the dispensation of the fulness of times; when Christ suffered as their Surety, Head, and Representative;

and when they were all considered as the children of God, whether in heaven or on earth, and whether among Jews or Gentiles, Eph. i. 10. John xi. 51, 52. and in order to bring these many sons to glory, it became him to be made perfect through sufferings, and that through his redemption of them thereby, they might receive, actually in their own persons, the adoption before provided for them, as before observed; see Heb. ii. 10. Gal. iv. 5.

II. Adoption is an act of God's free grace from all eternity. — 1. The elect of God are frequently spoken of as a distinct number of men, given to Christ, and as previous to their coming to him by faith, which is the certain fruit and consequence of that gift; see John xvii. 2—24. and vi. 37. yea, they were given to Christ before the world was; for if grace was given to them in him before the world began, they themselves must be given to him, and be in him before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. Now these were given to Christ in the relation of children, and therefore must be children so early; *Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me,* Heb. ii. 13. — 2. The elect of God were espoused to Christ in eternity; as has been shewn in the preceding chapter; which serves to illustrate and prove the relation of sonship to God so early; for as in natural and civil marriage, if a man marries a king's daughter, he becomes his son in law; as David to Saul: or if a woman marries a king's son, she becomes the king's daughter: So the elect of God, his church and people, being espoused to the Son of God, they become the sons and daughters of the Lord God almighty, the King of kings; and hence the church is called the King's daughter, Psal. xlv. 13. and these persons being betrothed to Christ, the Son of God, in eternity, as they were the spouse of Christ, they must be, and must be considered as being the sons of God so early. — 3. The elect of God were taken by him into the covenant of his grace, as children; the sum and substance of which runs thus, *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty,* 2 Cor. vi. 18. Now this covenant was from everlasting; as the setting up of Christ the Mediator of it so soon; and the promises and blessings, made and provided before the world began, do abundantly testify. Besides, in this covenant, these same persons so early were given to Christ, as his seed and offspring, his children, and he commenced the everlasting Father of them; see Isai. ix. 6. and liii. 10. — 4. Predestination to the adoption of children, is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it, and as an illustration of it, and as an addition to it, or, rather, a branch of it; as men by election are not only chosen to holiness, but to adoption, and the inheritance annexed to it, Eph. i. 4. 5. Adoption is a sentence of grace conceived in the divine mind, and settled by the divine will, and pronounced in divine predestination, which is an eternal act of God; and so says Dr. Ames[d], "Adoption is a gracious sentence of God, which sentence is pronounced in the same variety of degrees as justification; for it was first pronounced in divine predestination,

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[d] Medulla Theologiæ, l. 1. c. 28. s. 2. 3.

Eph. i. 5. afterwards in Christ, Gal. iv. 5. then in believers themselves, 6.” And all these pronunciations, and so all that Christ did in redemption respecting this, or the Spirit of God does in revealing, applying, and witnessing it, yea, all that will be done in eternity to come; for though now the saints are the sons of God, it doth not yet appear, clearly and fully, what they shall be, even as sons, or what dignity and glory they shall be raised unto, in consequence of this relation; I say, all these in time, and to eternity, serve only to open and expand the original act of God's will, in appointing and constituting them his sons in an eternity past.

II. Justification is an act of God's grace, flowing from his sovereign good will and pleasure; the elect of God are said to be justified by his grace; and as if that expression was not strong enough to set forth the freeness of it, the word freely is added elsewhere; *Being justified freely by his grace*, Tit. iii. 7. Rom. iii. 24. Justification is by many divines distinguished into active and passive. Active justification is the act of God; it is God that justifies. Passive justification is the act of God, terminating on the conscience of a believer, commonly called a transient act, passing upon an external object. It is not of this I shall now treat, but of the former; which is an act internal and eternal, taken up in the divine mind from eternity, and is an immanent, abiding one in it; it is, as Dr. Ames[e] expresses it, “a sentence conceived in the divine mind, by the decree of justifying.” Now, as before observed, as God's will to elect, is the election of his people, so his will to justify them, is the justification of them; as it is an immanent act in God, it is an act of his grace towards them, is wholly without them, entirely resides in the divine mind, and lies in his estimating, accounting, and constituting them righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and, as such, did not first commence in time, but from eternity.

1. It does not begin to take place in time, or at believing, but is antecedent to any act of faith. — 1. Faith is not the cause, but an effect of justification; it is not the cause of it in any sense; it is not the moving cause, that is the free grace of God; *Being justified freely by his grace*, Rom. iii. 24. nor the efficient cause of it; *It is God that justifies*, Rom. viii. 33. nor the meritorious cause, as some express it; or the matter of it, that is the obedience and blood of Christ, Rom. v. 9, 19. or the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his active and passive obedience; nor even the instrumental cause; for, as Mr. Baxter[f] himself argues, “If faith is the instrument of our justification, it is the instrument either of God or man; not of man, for justification is God's act; he is the sole Justifier, Rom. iii. 26. man doth not justify himself: nor of God, for it is not God that believes:” nor is it a *causa sine qua non*, as the case of elect infants shews; it is not in any class of causes whatever; but it is the effect of justification; all men have not faith, and the reason why some do not believe is, because they are none of Christ's sheep; they were not chosen in him, nor justified through him; but justly left in their sins, and so to condem-

[e] Ibid. c. 27. s. 9. [f] Aphorism. 5

ation; the reason why others believe is, because they are ordained to eternal life, ave a justifying righteousness provided for them, and are justified by it, and shall ever enter into condemnation: the reason why any are justified, is not because ey have faith; but the reason why they have faith, is because they are justified; as there no such blessing of grace as justification of life in Christ, for the sons f men, there would be no such thing as faith in Christ bestowed on them; pre- ious faith is obtained through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus hrist, 2 Pet. i. 1. nor, indeed, would there be any room for it, nor any use of , if a justifying righteousness was not previously provided. Agreeable to this e the reasonings and assertions of Twisse[a], Maccovius[b], and others. Now faith is not the cause, but the effect of justification; then as every cause is efore its effect, and every effect follows its cause, justification must be before ith, and faith must follow justification. — 2. Faith is the evidence and mani- station of justification, and therefore justification must be before it; *Faith is e evidence of things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. but it is not the evidence of that which yet is not; what it is an evidence of, must be, and it must exist before it. he *righteousness of God*, of the God-man and mediator Jesus Christ, *is revealed om faith to faith*, in the everlasting gospel, Rom. i. 17. and therefore must be efore it is revealed, and before faith, to which it is revealed: faith is that grace hereby a soul, having seen its guilt, and its want of righteousness, beholds, in e light of the divine Spirit, a complete righteousness in Christ, renounces its wn, lays hold on that, puts it on as a garment, rejoices in it, and glories of it; e Spirit of God witnessing to his spirit, that he is a justified person; and so he evidently and declaratively *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the pirit of our God*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. — 3. Faith adds nothing to the *esse* only to the *ne esse* of justification; it is no part of, nor any ingredient in it; it is a com- ete act in the eternal mind of God, without the being or consideration of faith, r any foresight of it; a man is as much justified before as after it, in the ac- ount of God; and after he does believe, his justification does not depend on is acts of faith; for though *we believe not, yet he abides faithful*; that is, God faithful to his covenant-engagements with his Son, as their Surety, by whose aretyship-righteousness they are justified; but by faith men have a comforta- le sense, perception and apprehension of their justification, and enjoy that peace f soul which results from it; it is by that only, under the testimony of the di- ine Spirit, that they know their interest in it, and can claim it, and so have the omfort of it. But, — 4. Justification is the object, and faith the act, that is con- ersant with it. Now every object is prior to the act that is concerned with ; unless when an act gives being to the object, which is not the case here; r faith, as has been seen, is not the cause, nor matter of justification; what e eye is to the body, that faith is to the soul; the eye, by virtue of its visive culty, beholds sensible objects, but does not produce them; they are before they are seen, and did they not previously exist, the eye could not behold them; the sun is before it is seen; and so in innumerable other intances: faith is to the soul, as the hand is to the body, receives things for its use; but then these things must be before they are received; faith receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, even that righteousness by which it is justified, from the God of its salvation; but then this blessing must exist before faith can receive it, Psal. xxiv. 5. Christ's righteousness, by which men are justified, is compared to a robe or garment, which faith puts on; but then as a garment must be wrought and completely made, before it is put on, so must the justifying righteousness of Christ be, before it can be put on by faith. — 5. All the elect of God were justified in Christ, their Head and Representative, when he rose from the dead, and therefore they believe: Christ engaged as a Surety for all his people from eternity, had their sins imputed to him, and for which he made himself responsible; in the fulness of time he made satisfaction for them by his sufferings and death, and at his resurrection was acquitted and discharged: now as he suffered and died, not as a private, but as a public person, so he rose again, and was justified as such, even as the representative of his people; hence when he rose, they rose with him; and when he was justified, they were justified in him; for he was *delivered for their offences, and was raised again for their justification*, Rom. iv. 25. see 1 Tim. iii. 16. and this is the sense and judgment of many sound and learned divines; as, Sandford[i], Dr. Goodwin[k], the learned Amesius[l], Hoornbeck[m], Witsius[n], and others.

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[a] Vindiciæ Gratiæ, l. 1. par. 2. s. 25. p. 197.

[b] πρῶτον ψεῦδος, Arminian. c. 10.

II. Justification is not only before faith, but it is from eternity, being an immanent act in the divine mind, and so an internal and eternal one: as may be concluded, — 1. From eternal election: the objects of justification are God's elect; Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies; that is, the elect. Now if God's elect, as such, can have nothing laid to their charge; but are by God acquitted, discharged, and justified; and if they bore this character of elect from eternity, or where chosen in Christ before the world began; then they must be acquitted, discharged, and justified so early, so as nothing could be laid to their charge: besides, by electing grace men were put into Christ, and were considered as in him before the foundation of the world; and if they were considered as in him, they must be considered as righteous or unrighteous; not surely as unrighteous, unjustified, and in a state of condemnation; for *there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ*, Rom. viii. 1. and therefore must be considered as righteous, and so justified: "Justified then we were, says Dr. Goodwin[o], when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came to have a being and an interest in him." — 2. Justification may well be considered as a branch of election; it is no other, as one expresses it, than setting apart the elect alone to be partakers of Christ's righteousness; and a setting apart Christ's righteousness for the elect only; it is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it; *Wherein*, that is, in the grace of God, particularly the electing grace of God, spoken of before, *he hath made us accepted in the beloved*, Eph. i. 6. What is this acceptance in Christ, but justification in him? and this is expressed as a past act, in the same language as other eternal things be in the context, he hath blessed us, and he hath chosen us, and having predestinated us, so he hath made us accepted; and indeed, as Christ was always the beloved of God, and well pleasing to him; so all given to him, and in him, were beloved of God, well pleasing to him, and accepted with him, or justified in him from eternity. — 3. Justification is one of those spiritual blessings wherewith the elect are blessed in Christ according to election-grace, before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 3, 4. That justification is a spiritual blessing none will deny; and if the elect were blessed with all spiritual blessings, then with this; and if thus blessed according to election, or when elected, then before the foundation of the world: and this grace of justification must be no small part of that *grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was*, 2 Tim. i. 9. "We may say, says Dr. Goodwin[p], of all spiritual blessings in Christ, what is said of Christ, that *his goings forth are from everlasting*—in Christ we were blessed with all spiritual blessings, Eph. i. 3. as we are blessed with all other, so with this also, that we were justified then in Christ!" — 4. Christ became a Surety for his people from everlasting; engaged to pay their debts, bear their sins, and make satisfaction for them; and was accepted of as such by God his Father, who thenceforward looked at him for payment and satisfaction, and looked at them as discharged, and so they were in his eternal mind; and it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius[q] observes, "that as soon as one becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted;" which is the case here: and it is but a piece of common prudence, when a man has a bad debt, and has good security for it, to look not to the principal debtor, who will never be able to pay him, but to his good bondsman and surety, who is able; and so Dr. Goodwin[r] observes, that God, in the everlasting transaction with Christ, "told him, as it were, that he would look for his debt and satisfaction of him, and that he did let the sinners go free; and so they are, in this respect, justified from all eternity." — 5. The everlasting transaction, the same excellent writer thinks, is imported in 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* And the very learned Witsius[s] is of opinion, "that this act of God may be called, the general justification of the elect." And, indeed, since it was the determination of God, and the scheme and method he proposed to take in Christ for the reconciliation of the elect, not to impute their sins to them, but to his Son, their Surety; then seeing they are not imputed to them, but to him; and if reckoned and accounted to him, then not to them; and if charged to him, then they must be discharged from them, and so justified; and a non-imputation of sin to the elect, is no other than a justification of them; and thus the apostle strongly concludes the imputation of Christ's righteousness: which is the *formalis ratio*, or the form of justification, from the non-imputation of sin, and remission of it, Rom. iv. 6—8. — 6. It was the will of God from everlasting, not to punish sin in the persons of his elect, but to punish it in the person of Christ; and that it was his will not to punish it in his people, but in his Son, is manifest from his setting him forth in his purposes and decrees, to be the propitiation for sin; and from his sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh; and from his being made sin and a curse, that his people might be made the righteousness of God in him. Now, as has been often observed, no new will can arise in God; God wills nothing in time, but what he willed from eternity; and if it was the eternal will of God not to punish sin in his people, but in his Son, then they were eternally discharged, acquitted from sin, and secured from everlasting wrath and destruction; and if they were eternally discharged from sin, and freed from punishment, they were eternally justified: Dr. Twisse[t] makes the very quiddity and essence of justification and remission of sin, which he takes to be the same, to lie in the will of God not to punish; and asserts, that this will not to punish, as it is an immanent act, was from eternity. — 7. It deserves regard and attention, that the saints under the Old Testament, were justified by the same righteousness of Christ, as those under the New, and that before the sacrifice was offered up, the satisfaction given, and the everlasting righteousness brought in; for Christ's blood was shed for the remission of sins that were past, and his death was for the redemption of transgressions under the first Testament, Rom. iii. 25. Heb. ix. 15. Now if God could, and actually did, justify some, three or four thousand years before the righteousness of Christ was actually wrought out, taking his Son's word and bond as their Surety, and in a view of his future righteousness; why could he not, and why may it not be thought he did, justify all his elect from eternity, upon the word and bond of their Surety, and on the foot of his future righteousness; which he had engaged to work out, and which he full well knew he would most certainly work out? and if there is no difficulty in conceiving of the one, there can be none in conceiving of the other.

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[i] De Descensu Christi, l. 3. s. 30. p. 59. [k] Works, vol. 4. part 1. p. 105, 106. [l] Medulla ut supra: [m] Summa Controvers. l. 10. p. 705. [n] Animadv. Irenic. c. 10. s. 1. see the words of these authors at length, and of others before referred to, in my treatise on Justification. [o] Ut supra.

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[p] Ibid. [q] Theolog. Quæst. loc. 31. qu. 6. [r] Ut supra. [s] Ut supra.

There are many objections made to this truth; some are so trifling as to deserve no notice; a few of the more principal ones I shall briefly answer and chiefly those made, for the most part, by the learned Turretine[u].

1. It is objected, that men cannot be justified before they exist; they must be, before they can be justified; since *non entis nulla sunt accidentia*, &c. of a non-entity nothing can be said, nor any thing ascribed to it. To which I answer, whatever is in this objection, lies as strongly against eternal election, as against

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[t] Ut supra, p. 104. [u] Institut. Theolog. tom. 2. loc. 16. qu. 9. s. 3.

eternal justification; for it may as well be said, how can a man be elected before he exists? he must be before he can be chosen, or be the object of choice. I own, with Maccovius[w], that this is true of non-entities, that have neither an *esse actu*, nor an *esse cognitum*, that have neither an actual being, nor is it certain, nor know that they shall have any future being: but though God's elect have not an actual being from eternity, yet it is certain, by the prescience and pre-determination of God, that they shall have one: for *known unto God are all his works from the beginning*, or from eternity, Acts xv. 18. And besides this, they have an *esse representativum*, a representative being in Christ; which is more than other creatures have, whose future existences are certain; even such a being as makes them capable of being chosen in Christ, and blessed in him before the foundation of the world, and of having grace given them in him before the world was; and why not then of being justified in him? Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. Moreover, as the same writer[x] observes, "Justification is a moral act, which does not require the existence of the subject together with it; but it is enough that it shall exist some time or other."

2. It is farther objected, that if God's elect are justified from eternity, then they were not only justified before they themselves existed, but before any sin was committed by them; and it seems absurd that men should be justified from sins before they were committed, or any charge of them brought against them. To which may be replied, that it is no more absurd to say, that God's elect were justified from their sins before they were committed, than it is to say, that they were imputed to Christ, and he died for them, and made satisfaction for them before committed; which is most certainly true of all those that live, since the coming and death of Christ: such that believe the doctrines of the imputation of sin to Christ, and of his satisfaction for it, ought never to make this objection; and if they do, they ought to be fully content with the answer. As for the charge of sin against God's elect, that is not first made when brought to the conscience of an awakened sinner; justice brought the charge against all the elect, in the eternal transactions between the Father and the Son; or how came Christ to be Bail and Surety for them? or how otherwise could there be a transfer of the charge from them to Christ? and where is the grace of a non-imputation of sin to them, and of an imputation of it to Christ, if it was not imputable to them, and chargeable on them?

3. It is urged, that strictly and accurately speaking, it cannot be said that justification is eternal, because the decree of justification is one thing, and justification itself another; even as God's will of sanctifying is one thing, and sanctification itself another; wherefore, though the decree of justification is eternal, nal and precedes faith, that itself is in time, and follows it. To which it may be answered, that as God's decree and will to elect men to everlasting life and salvation, is his election of them; and his will not to impute sin to them, is the non-imputation of it; and his will to impute the righte-

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[w] Loc. Commun. c. 69. p. 609.

[x] Theolog. Quæst. loc. 31.

ousness of Christ unto them, is the imputation of it to them; so his decree, or will to justify them, is the justification of them, as that is an immanent act in God; which has its complete essence in his will, as election has; is entirely within himself, and not transient on an external subject, producing any real, physical, inherent change in it, as sanctification is and does; and therefore the case is not alike: it is one thing for God to will to act an act of grace concerning men, another thing to will to work a work of grace in them; in the former case, the will of God is his act of justification; in the latter it is not his act of sanctification; wherefore, though the will of God to justify, is justification itself, that being a complete act in his eternal mind, without men; yet his will to sanctify, is not sanctification, because that is a work wrought in men, and not only requires the actual existence of them, but an exertion of powerful and efficacious grace upon them: was justification, as the Papists say, by an infusion of inherent righteousness in men, there would be some strength in the objection; but this is not the case, and therefore there is none in it.

4. It is observed, that the apostle, reckoning up in order, the benefits which flow from the love of God to the elect, in his famous chain of salvation, sets vocation before justification, as something antecedent to it, Rom. viii. 30. from whence it is concluded, that vocation is in order of time, before justification. To which I reply, that the order of things in scripture is frequently inverted. The Jews have a saying, that there is nothing prior and posterior in the law; that is, that the order of things is not strictly observed; to put that first which is first, and that last which is last; but the order is changed, and therefore nothing strictly can be concluded from thence; even the order of persons in the Trinity is not always kept to, sometimes the Son is placed before the Father, and the Holy Spirit before them both; which though it may be improved into an argument for their equality, yet not to destroy the order among them; and so with respect to vocation, it may be observed, that it is sometimes placed before election, 2 Pet. i. 10. but none but an Arminian would argue from thence, that it is really before it in order of time, or that men are not elected until they are called: on the other hand, salvation is placed before vocation, 2 Tim. i. 9. Who hath saved us, and called us, &c. from whence we might with as great propriety, argue, that salvation, and so justification, precedes vocation; as to argue from the other text in Romans, that vocation precedes justification, in order of time. Indeed nothing is to be concluded with certainty, one way or another, from such modes and forms of expression. Justification, as a transient act, and declarative, follows vocation; but as an immanent act in God, it goes before it, of which we are only speaking, as ought always to be remembered.

5. It is affirmed, that those various passages of scripture, where we are said to be justified through faith, and by faith, have no other tendency than to shew that faith is something pre-requisite to justification, which cannot be said if justification was from eternity. To which the answer is, that those scriptures

which speak of justification, through and by faith, do not militate against, nor disprove justification before faith; for though justification by and before faith differ, yet they are not opposite and contradictory. They differ, the one being an immanent act in God: all which sort of acts are eternal, and so before faith; the other being a transient declarative act, terminating on the conscience of the believer; and so is by and through faith, and follows it. But then these do not contradict each other, the one being a declaration and manifestation of the other. What scriptures may be thought to speak of faith, as a pre-requisite to justification, cannot be understood as speaking of it as a pre-requisite to the being of justification; for faith has no causal influence upon it, it adds nothing to its being, it is no ingredient in it, it is not the cause nor matter of it; at most, they can only be understood as speaking of faith as a pre-requisite to the knowledge and comfort of it, and to a claim of interest in it; and this is readily allowed, that no man is evidentially and declaratively justified until he believes; that is, he cannot have the knowledge of it, nor any comfort from it; nor can he claim his interest in it, without faith; and this being observed, obviates another objection, that if justification is before faith, then faith is needless and useless. It is not so; it is not of use to justify men, which it is never said to do; but it is of use to receive the blessing of justification, and to enjoy the comfort of it.

6. It is asserted, that justification cannot be from eternity, but only in time, when a man actually believes and repents; otherwise it would follow, that he who is justifyed, and consequently has passed from death to life, and is become a child of God, and an heir of eternal life, abides still in death, and is a child of wrath, because he who is not yet converted, and lies in sin, abides in death, 1 John iii. 14. and is of the devil, 8. and in a state of damnation, Gal. v. 21. but this latter especially cannot be admitted of, with respect to God's elect, even while unconverted. And now, to remove this seeming difficulty, let it be observed, that the elect of God may be considered under two different heads. Adam and Christ, and as related to two covenants at one and the same time; as they are the descendents of Adam, they are related to him as a covenant-head, and as such, sinned in him, and judgment came upon them all to condemnation and death, and so they are, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. But as considered in Christ, they are loved with an everlasting love, chosen in him before the world was, and always viewed and accounted righteous in him and so secured from everlasting wrath and damnation; hence it is no contradiction to say, that the elect of God, as in Adam, and according to the covenant of works, are under the sentence of condemnation; and that as in Christ, and according to the covenant of grace, and the secret transactions thereof, they are justified, and saved from condemnation. This is no more a contradiction, than that they were loved with an everlasting love, and yet are children of wrath, at one and the same time, as they most certainly are; nor than that Jesus Christ was the object of his Father's love and wrath at the same time, he sustaining two dif-

ferent capacities, and standing in two different relations, when he suffered in the room and stead of his people; as the Son of God he was always the object of his love; as the Surety of his people, bearing their sins, and suffering for them, he was the object of his wrath, Psal. lxxxix. 38.

7, It is urged what the apostle says, 1 Cor. vi. 11. *Now ye are justified*; as if they were not justified before; but the word now is not in the text; and was it, and admit that to be the sense of it, it does not follow that they were not justified before: for so they might be *in foro Dei* in the court of God, and in his account from eternity, and in Christ their Head and Surety, and especially when he rose from the dead, before now; yet not till now be justified in *foro conscientiæ*, in their own consciences, and by the Spirit of God, which is the justification the apostle is there speaking of. In a word, the sentence of justification pronounced on Christ, the representative of his people, when he rose from the dead, and that which is pronounced by the Spirit of God in the consciences of believers, and that which will be pronounced before men and angels at the general judgment, are only so many repetitions, or renewed declarations, of that grand original sentence of it, conceived in the mind of God from all eternity; which is the eternal justification pleaded for; and is no other than what many eminent divines of the highest character for learning and judgment, have asserted, as before observed; and it is to such as these Dr. Owen[z] refers, when he replied to Mr. Baxter, who charged him with holding eternal justification: "I neither am, nor ever was of that judgment; though as it may be explained, I know better, wiser, and more learned men than myself, (and he might have added, than Mr. Baxter,) that have been, and are."

OF THE EVERLASTING COUNCIL CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF MEN.

HAVING treated of the internal and immanent acts in the divine mind, and which are eternal; I shall consider the operations and transactions among the three divine persons when alone, before the world began, or any creature was in being; and which are, chiefly the council and covenant of God, respecting the salvation of men: these are generally blended together by divines; and indeed it is difficult to consider them distinctly with exactness and precision; but I think they are to be distinguished, and the one to be considered as leading on, and as preparatory and introductory to the other, though both of an eternal date; and shall begin with the council of God, held between the three divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit, concerning the affair of man's salvation before the world was. And it will be proper to enquire,

I. In what sense counsel, consultation and deliberation, can be ascribed to God, and,—1. This is not to be understood as expressive of any want of knowledge, or of the least degree of ignorance in God, or of his being at a loss in forming the scheme of salvation; since he is a God of knowledge, of all knowledge, is perfect in knowledge, wanting nothing; is the only wise and all-wise God, whose understanding is infinite, and reaches to all things, and nothing can escape it: want of knowledge is often the cause with men, and therefore they deliberate with themselves, and consult with others; but it is not so with God; wherefore, — 2. Consultation in him is not in order to gain more knowledge, or to obtain more satisfaction, and so more pleasure in the review of things; for since his understanding is infinite, there can be no accession to it, nor increase of knowledge in it: men consult with themselves, and reason on things in their own minds, or consult with others to gain more knowledge; and if this is not the result of it, yet it gives them satisfaction and pleasure, when those they have an high opinion of agree with them, and approve of their schemes; this makes their minds more easy, and confirms and settles them; and thus in the multitude of counsellors there is safety and delight; see Prov. xi. 14. and xxvii. 9. Nor, — 3. Does a council held between the three divine persons suppose any inequality between them; usually indeed with men, in matters of moment and difficulty, persons supposed to be of superior abilities are consulted, and their judgment taken; as Ahitophel by David, and the Israelites, whose counsel with them was as the oracles of God; but this is not to be supposed here, when the Father consults with the Son and Spirit, it is not because they have knowledge superior to him; or that he needs any information from them; they are one in nature, and are equal in knowledge and understanding; the Father is omniscient, the Son knows all things, and the Spirit searches the deep things of God; and yet may consult together; and three persons of equal knowledge and judgment among men may consult together about an affair of importance, without supposing any superiority and inferiority in them. — 4. Nor is consultation in God continued, carried on and protracted to any length, as it often is with men, who when they have a matter of difficulty before them, do not suddenly and at once determine; but take time and consider it in every point of view, that they may fix on the wisest and most rational method of acting; consultations on an affair have been sometimes held many days successively; but it is not so with God, counsel with him is as quick as thought, yea it is no other than his thought, and therefore they go together, Psal. xxxiii. 11. But, when consultation about the salvation of man is ascribed to God, it is intended to express the importance of it; not things trifling, but those of importance, are what men consult about and deliberate upon: such is the work of men's salvation, of the greatest moment not only to men, to their comfort and happiness here and hereafter, but to the glory of God: the glory of all whose perfections is greatly displayed in it, being so wisely contrived as it is for that purpose; wherefore it is not put upon any ny footing; nor into any hands, but into the hands of the Son of God, Psal. xi. 5. John xvii. 4. This way of speaking is used to set forth the wisdom of God displayed herein; schemes, which are the fruit of consultation and deliberation, are generally the most wisely formed, and best succeed: in the scheme of salvation by Christ, God has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; it is the manifold wisdom of God, in which that is displayed in the greatest fulness and variety; insomuch that angels, those wise and knowing creatures, desire to look more and more into it, Eph. i. 7, 8. and iii. 10. This being the effect of a council between the three divine persons, shews their unanimity in it; as they are one in nature, so they agree in one; and as in every thing, so in this, the salvation of men; the Father signified his mind that his Son should be sent to be the Saviour of men, when he may be supposed to put such a question as in Isai. vi. 8. *Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* the Son, knowing his Father's will, and assenting to it, declared his agreement with it, *Here am I, send me*; and the Spirit approving of the Father's motion, and the Son's consent, joined with the divine Father in the mission of him; *Now the Lord God, and his Spirit hath sent me,* Isai. xlviii. 16. and what inexpressible pleasure must such unanimity give to a believing soul, to declare which is the design of the divine consultation. These things being observed, I shall endeavour.

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[z] Doctrine of Justification vindicated from the animadversions of R. B. p. 9. see also p. 4.

II. To give some proof that there was a council between the divine persons concerning the salvation of men. — 1. An argument in favour of this may be drawn from the purpose of God; all whose purposes are called his counsels, because they are founded in the highest wisdom, Isai. xxv. 1. now the purpose of God respecting the salvation of men, is the basis and foundation of the council held concerning it, in which purpose, as well as council, all the three persons are concerned; for the scheme of salvation, which is *the manifold wisdom of God,* is *according to the eternal purpose which he* (God the Father) *purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,* Eph. iii. 10, 11. and the Son was not only privy to this purpose or counsel, and agreed to it; but the Spirit also who searches *the deep things of God,* and approves of them, which are no other than the purposes and counsels of his heart, 1 Cor. ii. 10. — 2. It appears there was a consultation held about the salvation of men from the gospel, which is an exhibition and declaration of the scheme of salvation, being called the counsel of God, Acts xx. 27. and the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom ordained before the world, 1 Cor. ii. 6. for it is no other indeed than a transcript of the council and covenant of grace; the sum and substance of the word and ministry of reconciliation, is that eternal transaction between God and Christ concerning it, which the apostle thus expresses; *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses,* 2 Cor. v. 19. — 3. It may be reasonably concluded, from the consultation had between the divine Persons, concerning the formation of man, thus expressed, *And God said, Let us make man in our image*; which was said, not to angels, but to the other two divine Persons, the Son and Spirit, and it is not necessary to understand the words as spoken the moment, or immediately before the creation of man, but as spoken in eternity, in council between the divine Persons; for it may be rendered, *God had said*; and, indeed, God had determined on this in the decree of election; for as in the decree of the end, he chose some of the creatures his power could make, to be happy with him, for his own glory; so in the decree of the means, he resolved on the creation of them; as has been before observed; however, be it that this consultation was immediately before the creation of man, as all the three Persons were concerned in that, and in his creation; it may be reasonably argued; that if there was a consultation of the divine Persons about the making of man at first, then much more about the redemption and salvation of him. But, — 4. What would put this matter out of all doubt, is the sense of a passage in Zech. vi. 13. as given by some learned man, if it can be established; And the council of peace shall be between them both: some, indeed, interpret it of the Kingly and Priestly offices meeting in Christ, and of the unanimity of them in him; since it is before said, He shall be a Priest upon the throne: but it seems rather to respect persons and things. Others have thought of Zerubbabel the prince, and Joshua the high-priest, who were unanimously agreed in building the second temple; but an edifice of another kind, and of a spiritual nature, the church of God, seems to be intended, the building of which is ascribed to a single Person only. Rather by the counsel of peace, may be meant the gospel, called the counsel of God, and the gospel of peace, which was to be, and has been among Jews and Gentiles, preached to them, both as to them that are nigh, so to them afar off, as in 15. and which was a means of making peace between them, and reconciling them together, Eph. ii. 17. and vi. 15. but there is another sense of them embraced by learned men, to whose judgment I pay a great deference; such as Heidegger, De Dieu, Cocceius, Witsius, Dr. Owen, and others, that this respects the council concerning the peace and reconciliation in eternity, between Jehovah and the Branch, between the Father and the Son, who in time was to become man. My objections to this sense have been, that this council in eternity was between the three Persons, and not two only; and that that is what is past; whereas this is spoken of as future: but when I consider that Jehovah and the Branch are the only Persons mentioned in the text, and so could only, with propriety, be spoken of, though the council was between the three; and that, in the Hebrew language, tenses are frequently put for one another, the past for the future, and so the future for the past; and things are said to be, when they appear to be, though they are before; the sense may be, that when the Man, the Branch, should grow out of his place, and build the temple, and bear the glory, and sit a priest on his throne, then it should clearly appear, that there had been a council of peace between them both, which was the ground and foundation of all: and in this light, this sense of the passage may be admitted, and so be a proof of the point under consideration. But if this is not the truth of this text; yet, — 5. That there has been such a transaction between the Father and the Son, which, with propriety enough, may be called the counsel of peace, we have sufficient warrant from 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses*; by the world is meant the elect of God, he so loved, as to send his Son to be the Saviour of, and for the life of whom Christ gave his flesh, John iii. 16. and vi. 51.

and about the peace and reconciliation of those, or in what way to make peace and atonement for them, God was in Christ, or with Christ, consulting, contriving, and planning the scheme of it; which was this, not to impute their sins unto them, but to Christ, now called to be the Saviour of them; and this contains the sum of what we mean by the council of peace. I proceed,

III. To observe, that the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and they only, were concerned in this council. — 1. Not angels, for they were not then in being, they were not made till the heavens were. But this council was before the heavens and the earth were made; and besides, the angels are the creatures of God, his ministring spirits, and therefore he would never consult with them: they knew nothing of this transaction until it was revealed unto them: and when it was, many of them, as some think, were offended at it, left their habitation, and apostatized from God; not being able to endure it, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be their Head, and so that nature be advanced above theirs, which they perceived by this step would be the case: and as for those that stood and kept thir first estate, they were so far from assisting in this council, that they were entirely unacquainted with it, until it was made known unto them; and when it was, though they highly approved of it, their knowledge of it seemed to be imperfect; since they desire to look more and more into it, and even do learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God in it, 1 Pet i. 12. Eph. iii. 10. — 2. Nor were men a party in this council; *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?* Rom. xi. 34. not any of the sons of men; for these also were not then in being, and when they were, were but creatures, and soon became sinful ones, and destitute of true wisdom and knowledge, and so unfit to be of such a council, had it been in time; and had God summoned all the individuals of human nature together, and proposed it to them, that if they could find out a way how they could be saved, consistent with his divine perfections, he would willingly save them; after ever so long a time allowed them for consultation about it; and even if they had had the assistance of all the angels in heaven, they must have returned an *ignoramus*, and owned they knew not any. No, none but the blessed Three in One were of this council, and fit to be of it; the thing consulted about was *nodus Deo vindice dignus*, worthy only of God. — 1. Jehovah the Father, the first Person in order of nature, though not of time, may reasonably be supposed to give the lead in this affair, and proposed the thing to be debated and advised about; he who, concerning the creation of man, proposed it to the other two Persons might, with great propriety, move for a consultation about his salvation: who is the ancient of days, with whom is wisdom, and who hath counsel and understanding, yea, is wonderful in counsel, as well as excellent in working; and so infinitely fit to conduct an affair of this nature, Job xii. 12, 13. Isai. xxviii. 29. — 2. Jehovah the Son, has the same wisdom, counsel, and understanding his Father has: for all that he hath are his; nor does Christ think it any robbery to be equal with him; he is wisdom itself, or wisdoms, he is possessed of the most consummate wisdom; in him, even as Mediator, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and he himself says, *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom*, Prov. i. 20. and viii. 14. see Col. ii. 3. yea, he is called *the Wonderful, Counsellor*, Isai. ix. 6. which not only respects his capacity and ability to give the best counsel and advice to men, as he does, but to assist in the council of God himself; and so the Septuagint interpreters understood that passage; rendering it, *the Angel of the great council*; whereby it seems as if those Jews then had a notion of this great transaction, and of the concern of the Messiah in it; to whom the whole verse belongs: to which may be added, that Christ the Son of God, was as one brought up with his divine Father, lay in his bosom, was privy to his designs, and must be in his council, and was on all accounts fit for it. — 3. The holy Spirit had a concern in this council, and was fit to be of it; Epiphanius says[g], as the Son is the Angel of the great council, so he is the holy Spirit; he is not only the Spirit of wisdom to men, and by whom is given to them, to one the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge; and therefore must be possessed of the most perfect wisdom and knowledge himself, Eph. i. 17. 1 Cor. xii. 8. but he is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of counsel and knowledge, to and resting on Christ as Mediator, Isai. xi. 2. and therefore must be a very proper Person to be concerned with the Father and the Son, in this great council; for never was such a council held as this, between such Persons, and on such a momentous and interesting affair. Which,

IV. Is the subject next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. Now the affair consulted about, was not the salvation of men merely; nor who should be the persons that should be saved with it; for both that was resolved on, and the persons fixed on who were to enjoy it, in the decree of election, which stands firm and sure on the unalterable will of God; but who should be the Saviour, or be the author of this salvation; and a proper person for this work could never have been devised, found out, and pitched upon, by men and angels; this was the business of this great council. By the decree of election the vessels of mercy were prepared for glory, or were ordained to eternal life, God resolved to have mercy on them, and save them; but who should be the saviour, was referred to this council to agree upon; it is true, indeed, that this was, in some respect, involved and included in the Father's purpose, according to election, who appointed some, not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. v. 9. but then, though this was in the Father's purpose, it was necessary that the will of the Son should be expressed, and his approbation and consent had; for which this council was called and held.

The case stands thus: it was in Jehovah the Father's thoughts, to save men by his Son; he in his infinite wisdom saw he was the fittest Person for this work and, in his own mind, chose him to it; and this is meant by laying help on One that is mighty, exalting one chosen from among the people; finding David his servant, and anointing him with his holy oil, Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20. Now in the eternal council he moved it, and proposed it to his Son, as the most advisable step that could be taken, to bring about the designed salvation; who readily agreed to it, and said, *Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God*, Heb. x. 7. from Psal. xl. 7, 8. and the holy Spirit expressed his approbation of him, as the fittest Person to be the Saviour, by joining with the Father in the mission of him, as before observed; and by forming his human nature in time, and filling it with his gifts and graces without measure. The pleasure and satisfaction the three divine Persons had in this affair, thus advised to, consulted, and approved of, is most clearly to be seen and observed at our Lord's baptism, Matt iii. 16, 17.

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[g] In Ancorato, s. 70.

But not only it was in this council consulted, who should be the Author of salvation; but also in what way and manner it should be effected, both for the security of men, and for the display of the glory of the divine perfections. Now it should be observed, that the elect of God, the persons to be saved, were considered in this transaction as fallen creatures, which salvation by Christ supposes; as sinners in Adam, on whom judgment came unto condemnation, as obnoxious to the curses of the righteous law, and to the resentments of divine justice; and therefore satisfaction must be made to the law and justice of God, the law must be fulfilled, and justice satisfied, by an atonement made; this was signified to the Saviour found, who approved of it, as a most fit thing to be done; hence God is gracious, and saith, *Deliver from going down to the pit*; *I have found a Ransom*, Job xxxiii. 24. this was found by infinite wisdom in this counsel; and whereas this ransom, satisfaction, and atonement, must be made by obeying the precepts of the law, and by the suffering of death, the penalty of it; this the law required of the transgressor of it; *Thou shalt surely die*; and so of the Surety for him; wherefore, since it was necessary that the Captain and Author of salvation, in bringing many sons to glory should be made perfect through sufferings; is was proper that he should assume a nature in which he would be capable of obeying and suffering, even a nature of the same kind with that which sinned; this was notified in council to the Son of God, and he approved of it as right and fit, and said, *A body has thou prepared me*, a whole human nature, in purpose; and now in council, signified he was ready to assume it in time. Moreover, it was seen proper and advisable, that the human natnre assumed, should be holy and pure from sin, that it might be offered up without spot to God; and be a sacrifice to take away sin, which it could not be, if sinful; now here a difficulty arises, how such a nature could be come at, since human nature would be defiled by the sin of Adam; and who would be able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This difficulty infinite wisdom surmounts, by purposing that the Saviour should be born of a virgin; that this individual nature to be assumed, should not descend from Adam by ordinary generation, but be formed in an extraordinary manner by the power of the Holy Ghost; and this was approved in ouncil, by both the Son and Spirit, since the one readily assumed this nature n this way, and the other formed it. Once more, it appeared necessary that is nature should be taken up into personal union with the Son of God; or, at the Saviour should be God and man in one person; that he should be man, at he might have somewhat to offer, and thereby make reconciliation for the ins of the people; and that he should be God, to give virtue to his deeds and ufferings, to make them effectual to the purposes of them,, and he be a fit ediator, a day's-man between God and men, and take care of the things be- onging to both. In short, the affair debated and consulted between the three ivine persons, was the peace and reconciliation of God's elect by Christ, and e way and manner of doing it; and therefore, as before observed, this trans- ction may, with great propriety, be called, the council of peace; and which sued in a covenant of peace, next to be considered; in this council every thing lative to it was advised; consulted, and contrived; and in the covenant the hole was adjusted and settled; and therefore I have considered the council as e preparation and introduction to the covenant.

OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT OF GRACE.

HE council before treated of, is the basis and foundation of the covenant of ace, and both relate to the same thing, and in which the same Persons are ncerned. In the former, things were contrived, planned, and advised; in the tter, fixed and settled. The covenant of grace is a compact or agreement ade from all eternity among the divine Persons, more especially between the ather and the Son, concerning the salvation of the elect. For the better un- rstanding these federal transactions between them, before the world was, when ere were no creatures, neither angels nor men in being; and which lay the undation of all the grace and glory, comfort and happiness, of the saints in ne and to eternity; it may be proper to consider,

I. The etymology and signification of the words used for covenant, in the ritings of the Old and New Testament, by which it will appear with what opriety these transactions may be called a covenant. The books of the Old estament were written in Hebrew, and the Hebrew word for covenant, roughout those writings is ברית *Berith*; which by different persons, is derived om different roots. There are a set of men called Hutchinsonians lately risen , who derive the word from ברר *Barar*, which signifies, to purify; and cause the word we translate make, which usually goes along with covenant, gnifies, to cut off, they warmly contend, that wherever we meet with this rase, it should be rendered, cut off the Purifier, by whom they understand the ord Jesus Christ. Now, though it will be allowed, that Christ is sometimes lled a Refiner and Purifier, Mal. iii. 3. yet not by any word or name derived from this root; nor is it likely, that a Purifier, or he that purifies, should be expressed by a noun feminine, as Berith is; and not by a noun masculine, or a participle belonging to this root; and though such a version of the phrase may happen to suit tolerably well with a passage or two; yet there are many places in which, were it so rendered, no sense could be made of them. If the word has the signification of purity, as a word of the same letters, though differently pointed has been twice translated *sope*, Jer. ii. 22. Mal. iii. 2. which is of a detersive, cleansing, and purifying nature. Rather as this is used for covenant, it may denote the purity of intention, and sincerity of heart, that ought to be in all persons that enter into covenant with each other; and which is most eminently true of the pure and holy divine persons, in their covenant engagements. But the word *Berith*, covenant, may rather be derived, as it more commonly is, either from ברא *Bara*; which, in the first sense of the word, signifies to create; a covenant being made with man, as soon almost as he was created, which covenant he transgressed, Hos. vi. 7. but the covenant of grace was made before the creation of man; though it was first made manifest quickly after his fall, which was not long after his creation; the sum and substance of which lies in those words, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*, Gen. iii. 15. The word, in a secondary sense, may signify, to order or dispose of things; as in creation things were disposed and put in an orderly manner, and with this may agree, the words διατιθεμαι and διαθηκη, used of a covenant in the New Testament, which signify, a disposing of things in a covenant or testamentary way. It is further observed by some, that the same Hebrew word, in another conjugation, signifies to cut in pieces and divide, and think that a covenant has its name from hence, because it was usual at making covenants, to slay creatures for sacrifice, and cut them in pieces, and lay them by each other, and the covenanters to pass between them; of which rite see Gen. xv. 9, 10, 17. Jer. xxxiv. 18. to which way of making a covenant by sacrifice, the allusion may be in Psal. l. 5. Or else the word may be derived from ברה *Barah*; which, among other things, signifies to eat food; it being usual, when covenants were made and confirmed, for the parties covenanting, to eat and feast together; as did Abimelech and Isaac, Laban and Jacob, Gen. xxvi. 30. and xxxi. 46. and it may be observed, that the Lord's supper, which is a feast, is a commemoration of the ratification of the covenant of grace, by the blood of Christ, and wherein and whereby the faith of God's people is strengthened and confirmed, as to their interest in it. But after all, it may be best to derive the word from this root, as it signifies to select and choose, and the rather, since all those roots, ברא, ברר and ברה have this signification; and which well agrees with a covenant, into which persons, of their own will and choice enter; choose the persons to be concerned with them, the terms on which they covenant with each other, and the things and persons they covenant about; all which entirely agrees with this federal transaction, or covenant of grace we are about to treat of.

The word used in the New Testament for covenant, is διαθηκη, by which vord the Sepfuagint interpreters almost always translate the Hebrew word *Beith* in the Old, and comes from a word which signifies to dispose, and that in covenant way, as in Luke xxii. 29. where the Father is said to appoint, or ispose, by covenant, a kingdom to his Son, as he also is said to appoint, or disose by covenant, a kingdom to his people; and the word from it, is used for covenant in Acts iii. 25. and in other places; and sometimes for a testament, r a man's will, Heb. ix. 17. and we shall see the use of the word in this sense ereafter, as it may be applicable to the covenant of grace; the word signifies oth covenant and testament, and some have called it a covenant-testament, or testamentary covenant; hence the different administrations of the covenant of f grace in time, are called the first and second, the old and new testament; and ven the books of scripture, written under those different dispensations, are so istinguished; see Heb. viii. and ix. 2 Cor. iii. 6, 14. It may not be improer to observe,

II. In what sense the word covenant is used in scripture, which may serve o lead into the nature of it. And, — 1. It is sometimes used for an ordinance, recept, and command; so the order for giving the heave-offerings to the sons f Aaron, is called a covenant of salt, a perpetual ordinance, Numb. xviii. 19. the aw for releasing servants after six years service, has the name of a covenant, er. xxxiv. 13, 14. and this may account for the Decalogue, or Ten commands eing called a covenant, Deut. iv. 13. for whatsoever God enjoins men, they re under an obligation to observe, nor have they right to refuse obedience to it; nd, indeed, the covenant of works made with Adam, was much of the same ature, only he had a will, consenting to obey, the bias of it being to the will f God, as well as power to perform. — 2. A covenant, when ascribed to God, s often nothing more than a mere promise; *This is my covenant with them, aith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee,* &c. Isai. lix. 21. hence we read of *ovenants of promise,* or promissory covenants, Eph. ii. 12. and, indeed, the coenant of grace, with respect to the elect, is nothing else but a free promise of ternal life and salvation by Jesus Christ, which includes all other promises of lessings of grace in it; *This is the promise that he hath promised us,* the grand omprehensive promise, *even eternal life,* 1 John ii. 25. and which is absolute nd unconditional, with respect to them; whatever condition is in that coveant, lay only on Christ to perform; he and his work are the only condition of t. And so, — 3. We often read of covenants of God only on one side; of this ind is his covenant of the day and of the night, Jer. xxxiii. 20. which is no ther than a promise that these should always continue, without requiring any ondition on the part of the creature, Gen. viii. 22. and the covenant he made with Noah and his posterity, and with every living creature, with which latter specially, there could be no restipulation, Gen. ix. 9—17. and so the coveant he promised to make for his people, with the beasts of the field, could be no other than a mere promise of security from hurt by them, Hos. ii. 18. But —4. A covenant properly made between man and man, is by stipulation and restipulation, in which they make mutual promises, or conditions, to be performed by them; whether to maintain friendship among themselves, and to strengthen themselves against their common enemies, or to do mutual service to each other, and to their respective posterities; such was the confederacy between Abraham, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; and the covenant between Abimelech and Isaac, and between David and Jonathan, Gen. xiv. 13. and xxvi. 28. 1 Sam. xx. 15, 16, 42. and xxiii. 18. Now, — 5. Such a covenant, properly speaking, cannot be made between God and man; for what can man restipulate with God, which is in his power to do or give to him, and which God has not a prior right unto? God may, indeed, condescend to promise that to man, which otherwise he is not bound to give; and he may require of man, that which he has no right to refuse, and God has a right unto, without making any such promise; and therefore, properly speaking, all this cannot formally constitute a covenant, which is to be entered into of free choice on both sides; and especially such a covenant cannot take place in fallen man, who has neither inclination of will to yield the obedience required, nor power to perform it. But, — 6. The covenant of grace made between God and Christ, and with the elect in him, as their Head and Representative, is a proper covenant, consisting of stipulation and restipulation; God the Father in it stipulates with his Son, that he shall do such and such work and service, on condition of which he promises to confer such and such honours and benefits on him, and on the elect in him; and Christ the Son of God restipulates and agrees to do all that is proposed and prescribed, and, upon performance, expects and claims the fulfilment of the promises: in this compact there are mutual engagements each party enters into, stipulate and restipulate about, which make a proper formal covenant; see Isai. xlix. 1—6. and liii. 10—12. Psal. xl. 6—8. John xvii. 4, 5. Which passages of scripture will be produced, and more fully opened hereafter.

III. The names and epithets given to this federal transaction, or covenant of grace, between the Father and Son, both in the scriptures and among men, may deserve some notice, since they may help to give a better and clearer idea of this transaction. — 1. It is called, *a covenant of life*, Mal. ii. 5. for though it is said of Levi, yet of him as a type of Christ; and if the covenant with Levi might be so called, much more that with Christ. Some divines call the covenant of works, made with Adam, a covenant of life; and so it may be; but then only as it respected that natural happy life Adam then lived, and as it contained a promise of continuance of it, and confirmation in it, should he stand the trial of his obedience; but not a promise of eternal life and happiness, such as the saints enjoy in heaven; for such a life was never designed to be given by, nor could come through a covenant of works; see Gal. iii. 21. But the covenant of grace contains such a promise, a promise that was made by God, that cannot lie before the world was; that is, a promise made to Christ, in the covenant o grace, from eternity, who then existed as the federal head of his people, to whom it was made, and in whose hands it is put for them: he asked life of his Father for them in this covenant, and he gave it to him, even length of days for ever and ever: and therefore with great propriety may this covenant be called, a covenant of life; see Tit. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 1. Psal. xxi. 4. — 2. It is called a covenant of peace, Mal. ii. 5. Isai. liv. 10. As the transaction between the eternal three, in which the plan and method of the peace and reconciliation of God's elect was consulted, may be called the council of peace; because that was a principal article considered in it; so, for the same reason, the covenant may be called the covenant of peace; for what was concerted in the council of peace concerning it, was fixed and settled in the covenant: as, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be the Peace-Maker, and should make peace by the shedding of his blood; and hence, in the fulness of time, he was sent to be the Man, the Peace, according to promise and prophecy, founded upon this covenant, Mic. x. 2, 5. and had the chastisement of peace laid upon him; that is, the punishment for the sins of the elect inflicted on him, whereby their peace and reconciliation was made, Isai. liii. 6. all which was by his own consent, and in consequence of the covenant made between him and his Father, and which, therefore, is rightly called the covenant of peace. — 3. It is commonly called by men, the covenant of grace; and properly enough, since it entirely flows from, and has its foundation in the grace of God: it is owing to the everlasting love and free favour of God the Father, that he proposed a covenant of this kind to his Son; and it is owing to the grace of the Son, that he so freely and voluntarily entered into engagements with his Father; the matter, sum and substance of it is grace; it consists of grants and blessings of grace to the elect in Christ; and the ultimate end and design of it is the glory of the grace of God. — 4. It is by some divines called, the covenant of redemption; and very truly, because the redemption of God's elect is a principal article in it: the Father proposed to the Son, that he should raise up, restore, redeem Israel, his chosen ones; the Son agreed to it, and hence he was declared and promised, and expected as the Redeemer, long before he came into this world to do this service; Job knew him as his living Redeemer, and all the old-testament saints waited for him as such, having had a promise of it, which was founded on this covenant-agreement; for as it was proposed to him, and he agreed to it, to be the Redeemer, so it was promised him, that upon the condition of giving himself, the redemption and ransom-price for the elect, they should be delivered from all their sins, and the effects of them, and out of the hands of all their enemies; see Isai. xlix. 5. and lix. 20. Job xxxiii. 24. But then, — 5. This covenant is the same with the covenant of grace; some divines, indeed, make them distinct covenants; the covenant of redemption, they say, was made with Christ in eternity; the covenant of grace with the elect, or with believers, in time; but this is very wrongly said; there is but one covenant of grace, and not two, in which the Head and Members, the Redeemer and the persons to be redeemed, Christ and the elect, are concerned; in which he is the Head and Representative of them, acts for them, and on their behalf. What is called a covenant of redemption, is a covenant of grace, arising from the grace of the Father, who proposed to his Son to be the Redeemer, and from the grace of the Son, who agreed to be so; and even the honours proposed to the Son in this covenant, redounded to the advantage of the elect: and the sum and substance of the everlasting covenant made with Christ, is the salvation and eternal happiness of the chosen ones; all the blessings and grants of grace to them, are secured in that eternal compact; for they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and had grace given them in him before the world was; wherefore there can be no foundation for such a distinction between a covenant of redemption in eternity, and a covenant of grace in time.

IV. The contracting parties concerned in this covenant, are next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. This covenant is commonly represented as if it was only between the Father and the Son; but I see not why the holy Spirit should be excluded, since he is certainly promised in it both to Head and members; and in consequence of it, is sent down into the hearts of God's covenant-ones, to make application of the blessings, promises, and grace of the covenant to them, and to work a work of grace in them; all which must be by agreement, and with his consent; and I think there are some traces, and some footsteps of all the three Persons, as concerned in it, in the dispensation and manifestation of this covenant to the people of Israel, Hag. ii. 4, 5. However, as in all covenants the contracting parties are, — 1. Distinct from each other, so in this; a covenant is not of one, but of more than one; no man covenants with himself; at least such a covenant is not properly one; Job is, indeed, said to make a covenant with his eyes, chap. xxxi. 1. but that was no other than a resolution within himself to lay a restraint upon his eyes, not to make use of them in such a manner as might tend to sin. The divine Persons of the sacred Trinity are distinct Persons, as has been proved in the article on that subject. And so they appear to be in their federal transactions with each other. He that called his Son to service, and directed him, or proposed the work he should do, *to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel*, &c. Isai. xlix. 3—6. must be distinct from him to whom he proposed all this; and he who in compliance with it said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!* Psal. xl. 7, 8. Heb. x. 7. must be distinct from him whose will he was so ready to do, and whom he calls his Lord and God, as he was, by virtue of his covenant-relation to him: and the Spirit, who was sent by them both, in consequence of a covenant-agreement, to be the Comforter of the covenant-ones, must be distinct from either. — 2. As they are distinct Persons, so they have distinct acts of will; for though their nature and essence is but one, which is common to them all and so their will but one; yet there are distinct acts of this will, put forth by and peculiar to each distinct Person: thus their nature being the same, their understanding must be the same; and yet there are distinct acts of the divine understanding, peculiar to each Person; the Father knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father, and they have a distinct knowledge and understanding of one another, and the Spirit knows them both, and they know him. And as their nature and essence, so their affections are the same; and yet there are distinct acts of them, peculiar to each Person; the Father loves the Son, and has put all things into his hands; the Son loves the Father, and is in all things obedient to him; the Spirit loves the Father and the Son, and they both love him: so their will, though the same, there are distinct acts of it, peculiar to each Person; and which appear in their covenanting with each other, and are necessary to it: there is the Father's distinct act of will notified in the covenant, that it is his will and pleasure his Son should be the Saviour of the chosen ones; and there is the Son's distinct act of will notified in the same covenant, he presenting himself, and declaring himself willing, and engaging himself to be the Saviour of them; which distinct acts of the divine will thus notified, formally constituted a covenant between them; and as the holy Spirit dispenses his gifts and grace, the blessings of this covenant, *severally as he will,* 1 Cor. xii. 11. this is pursuant to an agreement, to a notification of his will in covenant also.—3. These contracting Parties entered into covenant freely and voluntarily, of their own choice, as all covenanters do, or should; hence the Hebrew word for covenant, as has been observed, comes from a root, which signifies to choose; because men choose their own terms and conditions, on which they agree to enter into covenant with each other, not being compelled and forced thereunto. So it is in this everlasting covenant the Parties were at entire liberty to enter or not into it: the Father was under no necessity, nor under any obligation to save men; he could, in consistence with his justice, and the other perfections of his nature, have destroyed the whole world of men, as he destroyed all the angels that sinned; he was not obliged to make a covenant with his Son to save them; it was of his own choice he did it; who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy: nor was the Son compelled to enter into this covenant; but knowing his Father's will, and agreeing to it, voluntarily engaged in it, and said, *Lo, I come to do thy will:* and as the Spirit freely bestows his grace, and the gifts of it in time, so he freely engaged to do it in the covenant in eternity.—4. What they agreed in covenant, was what was in their power to perform; if one man enters into a covenant with another, and agrees to do what is not in his power, and which he knows it is not, when he enters into covenant, this is a fraud and an imposition on him, with whom he covenants; and in course the covenant is null and void. But the contracting parties in the covenant of grace, are able to perform whatever they covenanted about: the Father is able to make good all that he has promised in it, either to his Son or to the elect in him; and the Son is able to do the work he engaged to do; he had power to assume human nature into union with his divine Person, and to lay down his life in that nature, having such a power over his own life, and to dispose of it at pleasure, as no mere man ever had; and so being God, as well as man, was able to work out the salvation of his people, which he undertook; the Father knew he was able to save them, and therefore laid help on him, and called him to this work; and he knew himself to be equal to it, and therefore engaged in it: and the holy Spirit is a Spirit of power and might, and so able to perform the part he took in this covenant. — 5. As in all covenants, however the persons covenanting may be equal in other respects, yet in covenanting there is an inequality and subordination; especially in covenants, in which there is service and work to be done on one side, and a reward to be given in consideration of it on the other; of which nature is the covenant of grace and redemption; and though the contracting parties in it are equal in nature, perfections, and glory, yet in this covenant-relation they voluntarily entered into, there is by agreement and consent a subordination; hence the Father, the first Person and Party contracting, is called by his Son, his Lord and his God, a phrase always expressive of covenant-relation; see Psal. xvi. 2. and xxii. 1. and xl. 8. and xlv. 7. John xx. 17. and the Son, the second Person and Party contracting is called by the Father his Servant; *Thou art my servant*, &c. Isai. xlix. 3. hence the Father is said to be *greater than he*, John xiv. 28. not merely on account of his human nature, about which there could be no difficulty in admitting it; but with respect to his covenant-relation to him, and the office-capacity he has taken and sustains in it: and the Spirit, the third Person and contracting Party, he is said to be sent both by the Father and the Son, to perform that part which he undertook in it; and this oeconomy and dispensation of the covenant, thus settled in subordination among themselves by agreement and consent, is done with great propriety, beauty, and decency, suitable to their natural relations they bear to each other, as equal divine Persons; for who so proper to be the proposer of terms in the covenant, to direct and prescribe them, and to exercise a kind of authority, as he who is the first Person in order of nature, and that stands in the relation of a Father to the second person; and since here was work and service to be done, the salvation of the elect, and that in an inferior nature, in human nature, who so proper to engage in this service, and to assume this nature, and in it yield obedience to the will of God, than the second person, who stood in the relation of a Son to the first; and with what congruity is the third person, the holy Spirit, sent by both, to make application of the grace of both; who is said to be their Breath, and to proceed from both. — 6. As in all covenants some advantages are proposed unto, and expected by all parties concerned, so in this; as God's end in all things, in nature, providence, and grace, it his own glory, so it is in this covenant, even the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit; which must be understood, not of any addition unto, or increase of their essential glory, but of the manifestation of it; otherwise, as Christ is represented saying to his Father, *My goodness extendeth not to thee*, thou art not the better for my suretyship-engagements in covenant, and the performance of them; thou hast no real profit and advantage thereby; no new accession of glory and happiness accrues to thee by it; but the real profit and advantage resulting from hence is, *to the saints that are in the earth*, and *to the excellent, in whom is all my delight*, Psal. xvi. 2, 3. As for the glory promised to Christ, and which he expected and pleaded on his finishing his work, John xvii. 4, 5. this was either the manifestation of the glory of his divine Person, hid in his state of humiliation; or his glory as Mediator, his kingdom and glory, as such appointed to him, and promised him, upon the performance of his engagements, Luke xxii. 29. 1 Pet. i. 21. Heb. ii. 9. of which more hereafter; and yet, even the benefit of this redounds to the advantage of God's elect, John xvii. 22, 24. it is their salvation and happiness that is the grand thing in view in these covenant-transactions; this is *all my salvation*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. As the sum of the gospel, which is no other than a transcript of the covenant of grace, is the salvation of lost sinners by Christ; so the covenant, of which that is a copy, chiefly respects that, and that is the result of it: hence Christ, the Covenantee, has the name of Jesus, because he undertook to save, and came to save, and has saved his people from their sins, in consequence of his covenant-engagements.

OF THE PART WHICH THE FATHER TAKES IN THE COVENANT.

THE several parts which each contracting Party take in this covenant, are next to be considered.

The Father, the first person in the Trinity, takes the first place, and gives the lead in this covenant. All things are of God, that is, of God the Father; they are of him originally, they begin with him; all things in creation; he has made the world, and created all things by his Son; and so all things in the salvation of men, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ; he set on foot the council of peace, and so the covenant of peace, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself: that is, God the Father; he planned the reconciliation of men in council, and proposed it in covenant, and settled it with the other two persons; and he is not only the proposer, but the prescriber and enjoiner of things in the covenant; he both proposed the work to be done, and took upon him the authority, by agreement, to prescribe and enjoin it: hence we read of the injunctions, and commands laid on Christ with respect to his discharge of his office, as the mediator of this covenant, John x. 18. and xii. 49. and xiv. 31. it was the Father that called Christ from the womb of eternity to be his servant, and directed and enjoined his work and service, as appears from Isai. xlix. 1—6. and promised a reward to him on condition of his performing the service, and to bestow benefits on the elect in him, and for his sake. And let us,

I. Consider the work he proposed to Christ, which is the great and only condition of the covenant, and which he prescribed and enjoined him to do; which was, — 1. To take the care and charge of the chosen ones; these, as he chose them in him, he put them into his hands, not only as his property but for their safety; and here they are safe, for none can pluck them out of his hands; hence they are called the sheep of his hand, not only because they are guided by his hand as a flock, but because they are under his care and custody; they were not only given him as his portion and inheritance, but to be kept and saved by him; when they were committed to him, he had this charge given to him by his Father, that of all that he had given him he should lose nothing, not any one of them; they were told into his hands, and the full tale of them was expected to be returned: and which respects the whole of them, as their souls which he has redeemed, and does preserve, so their bodies likewise; for the injunction was that he *should lose nothing*, no part of them, not even their dust in their graves, *but should raise it up again at the last day*, John vi. 39. as he will. God not only made a reserve of them in Christ for himself, but they were preserved in him, and therefore are called the preserved of Israel, Jude 1. Isai. xlix. 6. and that Christ, in a covenant-way, by his own consent, was laid under such an obligation to keep and preserve the elect safe to glory, appears from his own account, both from what he says in his intercessory prayer; *those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost*, John xvii. 12. and from what he will say at the last day, when they are all brought in; *Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me*, Heb. ii. 13. all kept safe, and presented faultless; the kingdom of priests, the whole number of the chosen vessels of salvation, will be delivered up complete and perfect, agreeable to the charge committed to him, and his own voluntary undertakings. — 2. Whereas these same Persons made his care and charge, would fall in Adam, with the rest of mankind, and that into a state of sin and misery, and under the curse and condemnation of the law, he proposed it to him, and enjoined it as his will, that he should redeem them from all this; and hence agreeing to it, he was sent to do it, and has done it; this work, as proposed and prescribed in the covenant of grace, is expressed by various phrases, in Isai. xlix. 5, 6. as by *bringing Jacob again to him*; by Jacob is meant the elect of God, especially among the Jews, the remnant according to the election of grace; and bringing them again, supposes they were gone aside, apostatized from God, and turned their backs on him, and were gone out of the right way, gone astray, and become lost sheep: and the work of Christ as joined him in covenant, and he undertook, was to bring them unto God, and set them before him, to use Judah's words, when he offered to be Surety for Benjamin, Gen. xliii. 9. to bring them nigh to God; which he has done, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, Eph. ii. 13. 1 Pet. iii. 18. and also this work of Christ is expressed by *raising up the tribes of Jacob*; meaning the same persons, sunk into a low estate through the fall, into an horrible pit, into the mire and clay, into a pit wherein is no water: out of this low estate Christ was to raise them, as he did by the blood of the covenant, and made them kings and priests unto God; and likewise by *restoring the preserved of Israel*, even the same chosen ones,. among the people of Israel; who, by the fall, lost their righteousness, and forfeited their happy life in innocence; these Christ was to recover from their fallen sinful estate, and restore them, as he has done, to a better righteousness, and to a life more abundant than what they lost, to an higher state of grace, glory, and happiness; and if this should be thought by Christ to be too light and too low a thing for him to be the Saviour of the elect among the Jews; it is farther proposed, that he should be the light of the Gentiles, and the salvation of God unto the end of the earth, be the Saviour of all God's elect, both among Jews and Gentiles; not only to die for his people among the Jews, but to bring again, raise up, restore, and gather together the children of God, scattered abroad throughout the whole world; and be the propitiation, not for the sins of the chosen among the Jews only, but of those in the whole world of the Gentiles; so that this takes in the whole work of redemption and salvation, the work which Christ's Father gave him to do, and which he undertook and has finished, John xvii. 4. and with respect to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, our Lord says, Other sheep I have to take care of, to lay down his life for, besides those among the Jews, which are not of this fold, of the Jewish church state, but out of it; the Gentiles, them also I must bring, bring them again, raise up, and restore, and set before his Father; bring them into his church, and among his people, into an open state of grace, and to eternal glory; and this he says he must do, because his Father enjoined it, and he agreed to do it. — 3. In order to this, the Father proposed to the Son to assume human nature in the fulness of time, which was necessary to the work of redeeming the chosen people; as this was advised to in council, it was fixed in the covenant; *A body hast thou prepared me*, Heb. x. 5. not only in the purposes and decrees of God, in the book of which all the members of it were written, which, in continuance, were fashioned, when, as yet, there was none of them, before they were in actual being, Psal. cxxxix. 16. nor only in the prophecies of the Old Testament, in which it was foretold and promised, that the Messiah should become man, be the child born, and born of a virgin, and that the Man, the Branch, should grow up out of his place; but this was provided in covenant, not an human body only nor an human soul only, but the whole human nature; which, though it had not a real and actual, yet had a covenant subsistence, as it may be called: that is to say, the Father proposing it, and the Son assenting, as he did, by the above words; there was an agreement, a compact between them, that he should take into union with himself, a true body, and a reasonable soul; both which were necessary, to suffer the whole curse of the law; a true body, in which he might get his bread by the sweet of his brow, and suffer pains, sorrows, and death; bear the sins of many in it, and be offered up for them; and a reasonable soul, that he might endure the punishment of loss and sense; of loss, in being deprived for a while of the gracious presence of God, as when on the cross; of sense, in feeling the wrath poured into his soul, which made it exceeding sorrowful, as in the garden. And this nature proposed to be assumed, and was assumed, is of the same kind with that which sinned, and to which death was threatened, as it seems proper it should; the same flesh and blood with the children, and in which he was made like unto his brethren, excepting sin; and to assume such a nature was necessary, that Christ might have somewhat to offer, that would be acceptable to God, and satisfactory to his justice; this was part of the will of God enjoined in covenant, and which Christ agreed to do; that whereas ceremonial sacrifices would be disapproved of by him, as insufficient to take away sin, he would assume the body or human nature, prepared and provided in covenant for him, and offer it up, that sin might be condemned, and the righteousness of the law be fulfilled; for it is by this will, or the doing of it, that *we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*, Heb. x. 5—10. and this being the will of the Father, what he proposed and prescribed to be done; hence he is always represented as concerned in this affair: he promised to bring forth his Servant the Branch, the Man the Branch, that should grow out of its place; and he sent his Son, in the fulness of time, made of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Zech. iii. 8. and vi. 12. Rom. viii. 3. Gal. iv. 4. — 4. Another branch of the work assigned to Christ, in the covenant, by his Father, and to which he agreed, was to obey the law in the room and stead of his people; to which Christ has respect when he says, thy law is within my heart, or I am heartily willing and ready to obey and fulfil it; and which designs not only the law of mediation, or the command enjoined Christ as Mediator, with respect to the performance of his several offices as such: so with respect to his prophetic office Christ says, *The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak —— whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak*, John xiii. 49, 50. And with respect to his priestly office, his laying down his life for his people; *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again; this commandment have I received of my Father*, John x. 18. see chap. xiv. 31. And with respect to his Kingly office; I will declare the decree; that is, of his Father, the ordinance, statute, law and rule of governing his people; for this refers not to what follows concerning the generation of Christ, but to what goes before, concerning his Kingly office: but also the moral law, which he agreed to be made under, and was willing to fulfil, and for which he came into the world, and did become the fulfilling end of it, whereby he magnified it, and made it honourable; as it became him to do, as the Surety of his people, and which was necessary to their justification; for *by the obedience of One, many are made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. — 5. Another part of the work proposed to him, and enjoined him by his Father, was to suffer the penalty of the law, death; which must be endured, either by the sinner himself, the transgressor of the law, or by his Surety, Gen. ii. 17. wherefore it became the wise, holy and righteous Being, for whom, and by whom, are all things, to make the Captain of salvation, his Son, whom he appointed to be the Saviour of men, perfect through sufferings, for the satisfaction of law and justice; and therefore he enjoined him to bear them, Heb. ii. 10. hence Christ says, speaking of laying down his life for the sheep, *This commandment have I received of my Father*, John x. 18. and hence his sufferings are called, the cup which his Father had given him; not just then put into his hands, for he spake of it long before, as what he was to drink of; but was what was ordered him in the everlasting covenant, John xviii. 11. Matt. xx. 22. and hence also they are spoken of by all the prophets from the beginning of the world: and this being the Father's will in covenant, hence likewise it is that the Father had so great an hand in them, as to bruise him and put him to grief, to awake the sword of justice against him, and smite him; not to spare him, but deliver him up by his determinate counsel, into the hands of wicked men, and to death itself; and the covenant having somewhat of the nature of a testament, or of a man's last will, there was a necessity of the death of the testator to ratify and confirm it; which was to be done by the blood of Christ, called therefore, the blood of the everlasting covenant, Heb. ix. 15—17. and xiii. 20. — 6. When the Father signified in covenant, his dislike of the continuance of legal sacrifices, as insufficient to take away sin; he strongly suggested it was his will that his Son should become a sacrifice for it, and therefore prepared him a body, or human nature, in the covenant, capable of being offered up; and it was by his will expressed therein, that his covenant-people are sanctified through the offering once of the body of Christ, Heb. x. 5—10. This is the great condition of the covenant, and on which all the blessings of it depend; *When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin*, or rather, *When his soul shall make an offering for sin*; that is, when he shall heartily and willingly offer up himself, soul and body, a sacrifice for sin, then the benefits following should be conferred both on Christ, and on his spiritual seed, Isai. liii. 10—12. And, — 7. Farther, it was the will of the Father, in the covenant, that Christ should hereby make atonement for the sins of the chosen ones; this was the work which was assigned him in covenant, and is marked out in prophecy for him to do; namely, *To finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity*, Dan. ix. 24. and as he agreed to do it, for this purpose he became man, and by his bloodshed, sufferings and death, has made it; which lays a foundation of solid joy in his people, Heb. ii. 17. and ix. 26. and x. 14. Rom. v. 10, 11. — 8. In close connection with the former, his work assigned him in covenant was, to bring in everlasting righteousness, for the justification of the elect. God the Father in covenant, called him in righteousness, or to righteousness, to work out a righteousness for his people, commensurate to the demands of law and justice; and this call and proposal he answered and agreed to; hence the church of old could say, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*; and by virtue of the suretyship-righteousness of Christ, and his engagements in covenant, all the old-testament saints were justified, Isai. xlii. 6.

and xlv. 24, 25. — Lastly, The work which the Father proposed to, and prescribed to the Son was, *to feed the flock of slaughter*; to which he replied, *I will feed the flock of slaughter*; even all the elect of God, Zech. xi. 4, 7. and this feeding the flock committed to his charge, takes in his whole work as a shepherd; taking care of his sheep, laying down his life for them, gathering the lambs in his arms, carrying them in his bosom, gently leading those with young protecting them from all harms and enemies, bringing them into his fold here and above, setting them at his right hand, and introducing them into his kingdom and glory. This is the work that was before him; and his reward was with him.

II. On condition of Christ's engaging to do the above work proposed and prescribed to him, the Father promised in the covenant many things; some to him personally, and others to the elect, whom he personated and represented.

1. Some things to himself, respecting his work, assistance in it, &c. a glory on the nature in which he should do it, the honourable offices he should be invested with in it, and the numerous offspring he should have. — 1. As the work assigned him was to be done in human nature, which needed qualifications for it, strength to do it, help and assistance in it, support under it, preservation from enemies, and encouragement of success: all this was promised him, that as his human nature should be formed by the Holy Ghost without sin, so it should be filled with his gifts and graces; that the Spirit should be put upon him, and rest on him, as a Spirit of wisdom, counsel, might, knowledge, and of the fear of God, whereby he would be qualified to execute his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, Isai. xi. 1, 2. and xlii. i. and lxi. 1. and which was bestowed upon him without measure, Psal. xlv. 7. John iii. 34. and that whereas the human nature, in which this work was to be done, would be attended with weakness, with all the sinless infirmities of human nature, as it was at last crucified through weakness; God promised to strengthen him, and he believed he would be his strength, and accordingly, he was the Man of his right hand, whom he made strong for himself, Psal. lxxxix. 21. Isai. xlix. 5. Psal. lxxx. 17. and that, as he would need help and assistance in that nature, it was promised him, and he expected it, asked for it, and had it, Psal. xxii. 1, 19. Isai. l. 7, 8. and xlix. 8. and as it would want support, under the mighty load of sin, and sense of wrath, that it might not sink under it, this was promised and granted; so that he failed not, nor was he discouraged or broken, Isai. xlii. 1, 4. and as it would have many enemies, who would seek to take its life away before its time; God promised that he would keep and preserve him, and hide him in the shadow of his hand, and in his quiver, and so secure him, as he did from Herod, and the wicked Jews, Isai. xliii. 6. and xlix. 2, 6. and since he would be treated with great contempt in that nature, be despised by men, abhorred by the nation of the Jews, and be a servant of rulers; he was told, for his encouragement, that the Lord would choose him, and express delight and pleasure in him, as his elect; and though disallowed of men, would be chosen of God, and precious, Isai. xlii. 1. and xlix. 7.

and accordingly; delight and well-pleasedness in him were expressed by his Father, when both obeying and suffering, Matt. iii. 17. John x. 17. yea, success in his work was promised him, that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand; that is, the work of the Lord be succeeded, which it was his will and pleasure to put into his hand. Now all this was promised him in covenant, as an encouragement to engage in this work. — 2. As he was to do and suffer much in his human nature, so it was promised him, that he should have a very great glory conferred on him in that nature, not only that the glory of his Deity should be manifested and displayed, which was hid, especially from many, during his state of humiliation; for which, when he had done his work, he may be thought to pray, pleading a promise made to him, John xvii. 4, 5. But there was a glory to be put on his human nature, which was promised in the everlasting covenant, and which he had with his Father, in promise, before the world was; hence the prophecies of the old Testament, which are founded on covenant-engagements, speak, as of the sufferings of Christ, so of the glory that should follow, and of Christ's entering through sorrows and sufferings, into this kingdom and glory; and Christ believed and expected that he should be glorious, notwithstanding all his meanness in a state of humiliation, Isai. xlix. 5. Luke xxiv. 26. particularly it was promised him, that though he should die and be laid in the grave, yet that he should not lie so long as to see corruption, but be raised again the third day, as he was, and so had the glory given him, and which he had faith and hope of, Psal. xvi. 9—11. 1 Pet. i. 21. as also, that he should ascend to heaven, and receive gifts for men, or in man, in human nature; and accordingly he did ascend above all heavens, to fill all things, and gave the gifts to men he received, and that in a very extraordinary manner; whereby it appeared he was glorified, as was promised him, because the Spirit was not given in such a plentiful manner till Jesus was glorified, exalted at the right hand of God, and made and declared Lord and Christ, Psal. lxviii. 18. Eph. iv. 8—10. John vii. 39. Acts ii. 33, 36. Moreover, it was promised him, that in human nature he should sit at the right hand of God; a glory and honour which none of the angels was ever admitted to; but, in consideration of his obedience, sufferings, and death, he was highly exalted, as it was promised he should, and a name given him above every name; being placed on the right hand of God, angels, authorities, and powers being made subject unto him! Psal. cx. 1. Heb. i. 13. Phil. ii. 7—9. 1 Pet. iii. 23. and now he is seen crowned with glory and honour, and will come a second time in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels, all according to the covenant-agreement. In a word, it was promised him in covenant, on condition of making his soul an offering for sin, among other things, that God would *divide him a portion with the great*; give him as large and ample a portion, yea, a larger one, than any of the great men of the earth; that he would make him his first born, higher than the kings of the earth: and that he should *divide the spoil with the strong*, or take the prey out of the hands of the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive; which spoil and prey being taken out of the hands of the strong, should be his portion and inheritance; and that because he poured out his soul unto death, was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, Isai. liii. 12. — 3. As an encouragement to Christ to engage in the above work proposed to him, in covenant, it was promised him, that he should be invested with, and sustain several honourable offices, which he should execute in human nature; as, that he should be the great prophet of the church; not only the minister of the *circumcision for the truth of God* to the Jews; but be *for a light of the Gentiles*; which is twice promised; where plain traces of this everlasting covenant are to be seen, Isai. xlii. 6. and xlix. 6. and he accordingly was expected to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of the people of Israel, Luke ii. 32. and he was so, by the ministry of his apostles, in the Gentile-world; and still is, by the preaching of his ministers in it; whereby men are turned from darkness to light, and to shew forth the praises of him who has called him out of the one to the other, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Eph. ii. 17. Acts xxvi. 18. — It was also promised, and swore to by an oath in covenant, that he should be a Priest; an honour which no man takes to himself; but he that is called to it, as was Aaron; even Christ glorified not himself, to be called an High Priest; but his Father, who invested him with his office, by an oath, to shew the immutability of it; and that he should continue in it, and be a priest on his throne, Psal. cx. 4. Heb. v. 4, 5. and vii. 21. Zech. vi. 13. Likewise, that he should be King of Zion, of saints, over his church and people, and have a kingdom very large, from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth; of which government, and the increase of it, there should be no end; a dispensatory kingdom, besides that of nature and providence, which he had a right to, as a divine Person; but this is a kingdom disposed of to him in covenant and by promise; *I appoint unto you a kingdom*, says Christ, *as my Father hath appointed me*, διέθετο, has disposed of or appointed in covenant to me, Luke xxii. 26. Once more, God has appointed him in covenant to be the Judge of quick and dead; and has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he has ordained; and accordingly, he has committed all judgment to him, that all men should honour him as they honour the Father, Acts x. 42. and xvii. 31. John v. 22, 23. — 4. In consequence of fulfilling the condition of the covenant, engaging to do, and doing the above work proposed in it; it was promised to Christ, that he should *see his seed, and prolong his days*, Isai. liii. 10. that is, that he should have a spiritual offspring, a seed that should serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation; that he should be an everlasting Father to them, and they be his everlasting children; that as the first Adam was the common parent, and federal head of all his posterity, who sinning, conveyed sin and death to them; so the second Adam becomes the Father and federal Head of a spiritual offspring, and conveys grace, righteousness, and life unto them; it was promised him, that that this seed of his should be numerous, and continue long;

yea, that these children should endure for ever, and his throne be as the days of heaven; and that these should be his portion, and his inheritance; not only the elect among the Jews, but those among the Gentiles also; and therefore he was bid to ask of his Father in covenant, and he would give him *the heathen for his inheritance*, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; which accordinly he asked, and has, and is well pleased with his portion, and says, the lines are fallen to him in pleasant places, and he has a goodly heritage, Isai. ix. 6. Psal. xxii. 30. and lxxxix. 29, 36. and ii. 8. and xvi. 6. yea, it was promised him, that all persons and things should be put into his hands, to subserve his mediatorial interest, and the good of his spiritual seed, his covenant-people; even all the wicked of the earth, whom he diposes of as he pleases, and rules with a rod of iron: he is given to be an Head over all things to the church; for its preservation and security; and has power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; and accordingly all things are put into his hand, and all creatures are at his disposal; all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him, so that he can order and appoint whatsoever he pleases for the good of his people, Psal. ii. 9. Eph. i. 22. John xvii. 2. and iii. 35.

II. There are other things which God the Father promised in covenant, respecting the elect, the persons for whom Christ was a covenantee, and whom he represented in the covenant, and for whose sake he was to do all the work proposed to him, and which he undertook. And, — 1. It was promised, that upon Christ's engaging in, and performing the work of redemption, they should be delivered out of that state of misery sin brought them into, even out of the pit wherein is no water, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Zech. ix. 11, that they should be redeemed from all their inquities, original and actual, which should be cast behind God's back, and into the depths of the sea, never to be seen and remembered more to their condemnation, Psal. cxxx. 8. that they should be ransomed from the hand of Satan, stronger than they, and the prey be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered, Jer. xxxi. 11. Isai. xlix. 24, 25. that they should be freed from the law, its curse, and condemnation, Christ being made a curse for them, and sin condemned in his flesh, Rom. viii. 1, 3, 33. Gal. iii. 13. and that they should be secured from hell, wrath, ruin, and everlasting destruction their sins deserved, Job xxxiii. 24. — 2. That upon the faithful discharge of his office, as a Servant, particularly in bearing the sins of his people, they should be openly justified and acquitted; that his righteousness he would bring in, should be made known unto them, and received by faith; and so they should be manifestatively, and in their own consciences, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, Isai. liii. 11. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. — 3. That all their iniquities should be forgiven them, for Christ's sake, and their sins and transgressions be remembered no more. This is a special and particular article in the covenant, to which all the prophets bear witness, Jer. xxxi. 34. Acts x. 43. — 4. That they should be openly adopted, and declared the children of God, and be dealt with as such; that God should be their God, their Father, their Portion and Inheritance; and they should be his people, his children, and heirs of him, and be treated as such by him; as they would be when chastised for their sins, the rod being provided for them in covenant, as well as their inheritance. Jer. xxxii. 38. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Psal. lxxxix. 30, 34. Heb. xii. 7. — 5. That they should be regenerated, their hearts spiritually circumcised to love the Lord, and his fear put into them, and be made willing in the day of his power upon them, to be saved by him, and to serve him, Deut. xxxi. 6. Jer. xxxii. 39. Psal. cx. 3. that they should be made new creatures, have new hearts and spirits put within them, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace and holiness, joy, peace, and comfort; that the stony heart should be taken out of them, the hardness and impenitence of it removed, and an heart of flesh given them, soft, penitent, and contrite; or in other words, that true, spiritual, evangelical repentance for sin should be granted to them, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. — 6. That they should have knowledge of God, as their covenant-God and Father; even the least, as well as the greatest, be all taught of God, as his children, and so believe in Christ; for those that hear and learn of the Father, come to Christ; that is, believe in him, Jer. xxxi. 34. Isai. liv. 13. John vi. 45. So that repentance and faith are not terms and conditions of the covenant, but are free grace-gifts granted, and blessings of grace promised in the covenant, and are as sure to the covenant-people, as any other blessings whatever, Acts xi. 18. and v. 31. Eph. ii. 8. — 7. It is another promise in this covenant, that the law of God should be put into their inward parts, and written on their hearts; that they should have a spiritual knowledge of it, and a cordial respect unto it, a real delight in it, and serve it with their minds and spirits, and yield a constant, ready, and chearful obedience to it, Jer. xxxi. 33. Rom. vii. 22, 25. as well as be the epistles of Christ, and have the law of faith, or doctrine of the gospel, take place in their hearts, and dwell richly in them, and they yield a professed subjection to it. — 8. It is further promised by the Lord, in this covenant, that whereas they are weak and strengthless, and unable to do any thing spiritually good of themselves, that he will put his Spirit within them; who should work in them both to will and to do; and strengthen them with strength in the inward man, and enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. so that likewise new spiritual and evangelical obedience, both to law and gospel, is no term and condition of the covenant, but a blessing secured in it, which absolutely provides with grace and strength to perform it. — 9. Another article in this covenant, respecting the chosen and covenant-people, is, that they shall persevere in grace, in faith, and holiness, to the end; this is absolutely promised in it, and the faithfulness of God is engaged to perform it; *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me,* Jer. xxxi. 40. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. — 10. Glory, as well as grace, is romised in this covenant; and to whom God gives the one, he gives the other; ternal life was promised before the world began; and the promise of it was nade unto Christ in the everlasting covenant, and put into his hands for his peole; and it is represented as if it was the only promise in it, being the grand, rincipal, and comprehensive one; *This is the promise that he has promised us*, ven *eternal life*, Tit. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 1. 1 John ii. 25. hence our Lord, in an uthoritative way, as it were, demands the glorification of ALL the Father has iven him, and he undertook for in covenant, John xvii. 24.

OF THE PART THE SON OF GOD HAS TAKEN IN THE COVENANT.

THE part which the Son of God takes, and the place and office he has in the covenant of grace, are next to be considered. Christ has so great a concern in the covenant, that he is said to be the Covenant itself; *I will give thee for a Covenant of the people*, Isai. xlii. 6. and xlix. 8. his work, that which was proposed to him, and he agreed to do, is, as has been observed, the grand condition of the covenant, and he himself is the great blessing of it; he is the Alpha and the Omega, as of the scriptures, so of the covenant of grace; he is the first and the last in it, the sum and substance of it; he is every thing, ALL in ALL in it; all the blessings of it are the sure mercies of him, who is David, and David's Son; he is prevented with all the blessings of goodness, and the covenant-people are blessed with all the spiritual blessings in him, as their covenant-head; all the promises are made to him, and are all yea and amen in him; he sustains various characters and offices in the covenant. He is the representative-Head of his people in it; he is the Mediator, Surety, Testator, and Messenger of it; of all which, more particularly and distinctly hereafter. At present I shall only observe Christ's assent to his Father's proposals, his acceptance of them, and open declaration of his readiness and willingness to act according to them, which formerly constitute the covenant and compact between them; his consent thereunto is fully expressed in Psal. xl. 6—8. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering, and sin-offering, hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God! yea, thy law is within my heart.* Which words, though spoken and written by David, yet as personating the Messiah, as is certain from the application of them to him by the apostle, in Heb. x. 5—10. according to whom, the time when these words were spoken, was when he cometh into the world, that is, at his incarnation, when he came from heaven to earth, by the assumption of human nature, to do the will and work of his Father, which he proposed unto him; then he said all the above in fact, what he had before said in word, in promise; *Lo, I come to do thy will*; for that this was said before is plain, since it was known to David, in his time, and written by him, as the pen-man of the Holy Ghost, and as personating Christ, and was repeated and confirmed by Christ at his coming into the world: and when could it be said before, but in the covenant of grace? Likewise it appears, that this was said on the account of the insufficiency of legal sacrifices to atone for sin; in proof of which the apostle quotes the words, *It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin*; wherefore—he saith, *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not*, &c. that is, though they were the institutions and appointment of God, yet he would not have them continued any longer than the coming of Christ, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of them to take away sin, and because they were to have, and had, their accomplishment in him; in the fore-views of which this was said in David's time, and earlier by Christ, in the covenant of grace; in which, knowing his Father's will concerning sacrifices, and their continuance, as well as the insufficiency of them, freely declared that he was ready to come, in the fulness of time, and give himself an offering for sin; as his Father had proposed to him he should, Isai. liii. 10. This assent and consent of his is first more obscurely and figuratively expressed; *Mine ears hast thou opened*, digged or bored; expressive of his great attention, hearkening and listening with great diligence, to what his Father proposed to him; see Isai. l. 4, 5. and of his ready and chearful obedience to his Father's will, signified thereby: the phrase seems to be used in allusion to the boring the servant's ear, who cared not to quit his master's house, but was willing to serve him for ever, Exod. xxi. 5, 6. the Septuagint, and so the apostle render the words, *A body hast thou prepared me*; a part being put for the whole; and which is supposed; for the ear could not be opened, unless a body was prepared; by which is meant, not a part, but the whole of the human nature, soul and body; prepared, not only in the purposes and decrees of God, but in the covenant of grace, where it had a covenant-subsistence, by the joint-agreement of the divine Persons; for as the Father proposed it to the Son, that he should have such a nature, he agreed to assume it, and therefore takes up these words, to shew his ready assent to it; A body hast thou prepared me; as it is thy pleasure I should have one, I am ready to take it, at a proper time; that I might have something to offer, an offering of more avail, and more acceptable, than the legal ones. This acceptance of his Father's proposals is more clearly and fully expressed; Lo, I come to do thy will; that is, to assume human nature, to lay down his life in it, to suffer death, make atonement for the sins of his people, and obtain their redemption and salvation; his willingness to do all this freely, and without compulsion; he himself, and not another, and immediately, as soon as ever it should be necessary; he declares, with a note of admiration, attention, and asseveration; and his heartiness in it is still more fully signified, by saying, I delight to do thy will; it was with the utmost pleasure and complacency that he complied with it, and it would be his meat and drink, as it was, to do it: and it is added; *Yea, thy law is with-*

n *my heart*; it is in my heart to fulfil it; I am ready to yield a cordial and
hearful obedience to it. Now all this was written concerning him in the vo-
ume of the book; not of the scriptures in general only, nor of the Pentateuch
n particular, the only volume extant in David's time, *εν κεφαλιδι*, at the head and
eginning of which is a declaration of the grace, will, and work of Christ, Gen.
i. 15. nor only of the book of God's purposes, Psal. cxxxix. 16. but of the
ovenant; alluding to the writing, signing, and sealing of covenants; the cove-
ant at Sinai is called, the book of the covenant, Exod. xxiv. 8. Now in
his volume, or book, as the Father's proposal is there written and contained,
o is the Son's assent unto it, and acceptance of it. Add to all this, that the
haracter in which Christ here addresses his divine Father, My God, is a
hrase expressive of covenant-relation, and is frequently so used both with re-
ard to Christ and his people. But, to observe no more, nothing more fully
roves Christ's free and full assent and consent to do the will of his Father,
roposed in covenant, than his actual performance of it. Was it his will
hat he should take the care and charge of all his elect, and lose none? he has
one it, John xvii. 12. Was it his will that he should assume human na-
ure? the Word has been made flesh, and dwelt among men, John i. 14. Was
t his will that he should obey the law? he is become the end of the law for
ighteousness, Rom. x. 4. Was it his will that he should suffer death, the penal-
y of it? he has suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God, 1 Pet.
ii. 18. Was it his will that he should make himself an offering for sin? he
as given himself to God, an Offering, and a Sacrifice, of a sweet-smelling sa-
vour, Eph. v. 2. In a word, Was it his will that he should redeem his people
from all their iniquities? he has obtained an eternal redemption of them, Heb.
ix. 12,

OF CHRIST, AS THE COVENANT-HEAD OF THE ELECT.

THERE are various characters, relations, and offices, which Christ sustains in the covenant of grace; among which, that of a federal Head is one: Christ is often said to be the Head of the church; not of any particular congregation of saints, in this or the other part of the world; but of the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, even of all the elect of God, that ever have been, are, or will be in the world, Eph. i. 22, 23. and v. 23. Col. i. 18. and he is a Head to them in different senses; he is that to them as a natural head is to a natural body, and the members of it; which is of the same nature with it, superior to it, communicates life, sense and motion to it, as well as overlooks and protects it; such an head of influence is Christ to the Church, the source of life to it, from whom nourishment is derived, and all the supplies of grace, Eph. iv. 15, 16. Col. ii. 19. he is an Head in a political sense, as a captain-general is head of his army, and a king is head of his subjects, Judg. x 11. xi. 11. Hos. i. 11. and in an oeconomical sense, as the husband is the head of the wife, and a father the head of his children, and a master the head of his servants, and of his whole family, Numb. i. 4. Eph. v. 23, 24. Isai. ix. 6. Matt. xxiii. 10. The headship of Christ in the several senses, chiefly belongs to his Kingly office; but besides these, he is the representative-head of his church, or of all the elect of God; they were all considered in him, and represented by him, when he covenanted with his Father for them; all that he engaged to do and suffer, was not only on their account, but in their name and stead; and all that he received, promises and blessings, were not only for them, but he received them as personating them. As Christ was given to be the covenant of the people, so to be an Head of them in it, Eph. i. 22. And thus, — 1. Christ was considered in election; he was chosen a Head, and his people as members in him, and so they had union to him, and a representative-being in him before the world began; they did not then personally exist, but Christ did, who represented them, and therefore were capable of being chosen in him, as they were, Eph. i. 4. — 2. Such a relation Christ stood in to them in the covenant, that was made, not with him alone, but with all the elect of Gad, considered in him as their head and representative; hence we read of the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ; which was of God made sure and firm with his covenant-people, in Christ, as their Head, before the foundation of the world; when as yet they had not an actual being, only a representative one in Christ, Gal. iii. 17. and hence the covenant was made sure to them in him, before the manifestation and application of it to Abraham, and his spiritual seed spoken of in the preceding verse; so that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after that revelation and manifestation of the covenant to Abraham, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect; for what commences in time, can never make void what was confirmed in eternity. — 3. The promises of grace and glory, made to the elect of God in covenant, were made to them, as considered in Christ, their head and representative; for whereas these promises were made before the world began, Tit. i. 2. they could not be made to them in their own persons, but as personated by Christ, and therefore were made to him their Head, and to them in him; and hence the promise of life is said to be in him, 2 Tim. i. 1. and indeed, all the promises are Yea and Amen in him, 2 Cor. i. 20. The apostle having said, that to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, observes, he saith not and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ; who is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring, and in whom they are all collected and considered; all the promises made, manifested, and applied to Abraham, and his spiritual seed, were originally made to Christ, the everlasting Father of his spiritual offspring, the common Head and Parent of them, Gal. iii. 16. — 4. All the blessings of grace, and grants of them in the covenant of grace, given and made to the elect in it, were given and made to Christ first in their name, and as personating them, and to them in him, as considered in him, their head and representative? for when these grants were made, and blessings bestowed, they were not in actual being, only had a representative one in Christ their head; hence grace is said to be given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began; and they to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, 2 Tim. i. 9. Eph. i. 3, 4. — 5. Christ, in the everlasting covenant, engaged in the name of his people, to obey and suffer in their stead; and accordingly he did both in time, as their Head and representative. He obeyed the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, not as a single individual of human nature, and for himself, but as the federal Head of his people, as representing them; *That so the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*, says the apostle, Rom. viii. 4. that is, in the elect of God, they being considered in Christ their Head, when he became the fulfilling End of the law for righteousness unto them; and so they were made, or accounted, the righteousness of God in him their Head, Rom. x. 4. 2 Cor. v. 21. in like manner as he in their name engaged to suffer for them; so in time he suffered in their room and stead, as their head and representative; insomuch that they may be truly said to suffer with him; they were all gathered together, recollected in one Head, in Christ, and sustained and represented by him when he hung upon the cross, and are said to be *crucified with* him, Eph. i. 10. Col. ii. 12. — 6. in consequence of Christ's covenant engagements and performances, when he rose from the dead, he rose not as a private Person, but as a public Person, as the head and representative of all those for whom he obeyed and suffered; and therefore they are said to be quickened and raised together with him, as they were then also justified in him, when he himself, as their Head and Surety was, Eph. ii. 5, 6. Col. iii. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Yea, Christ is also gone to heaven, not only as the Forerunner of his people, but as their Head and Representative; he has taken possession of heaven in their name, appears in the presence of God for them, and personates them, as the high-priest did the children of Israel, in the holy of holies; and hence they are said to be made to sit together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*, Eph. ii. 6. — 7. The federal headship of Christ, may be argued and concluded from Adam being a federal head and representative of all his natural offspring; in which he was the figure of him that was to come, that is, Christ; for it was in that chiefly, if not solely, that he was a figure of Christ; at least that is the chief, if not the only thing the apostle has in view, Rom. v. 14. as appears by his running the parrallel between them, as heads and representatives of their respective offspring: Adam, through his fall, conveying sin and death to all his natural descendants; and Christ through the free gift of himself, communicating grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual seed, the elect, the children his Father gave him: and hence these two are spoken of as the first and last Adam, and the first and second man; as if they were the only two men in the world, being the representatives of their several seeds, which are included in them, 1 Cor. xv. 45. 47.

Now, as Christ stands in the relation of an head to the elect, he has all things delivered into his hands; in honour to him, and in love both to him and them, and for their good; God has given him to be Head over all things to the church, Matt. xi. 27. John iii. 35. Eph. i. 22. all persons and things are under his command, and at his disposal, to subserve his interest as Head of the church; even angels and men, good and bad, and all things in heaven and in earth; all power therein to protect and defend his people, and to provide for them; all fulness of grace, and the blessings of it to supply them; the government of the church, and of the world, is on his shoulders, who represents them; and therefore their persons, grace and glory, must be safe in him; the covenant, and all its blessings and promises, are sure in him, the Head and Representative of his people in it.

OF CHRIST, AS THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT.

ANOTHER relation, or office, which Christ bears in the covenant, is that of Mediator; three times in the epistle to the Hebrews is he called the Mediator of the new, or better covenant or testament, chap. viii. 6. and ix. 15. and xii. 24. the same with the everlasting covenant, only so called in reference to a former administration of it. The apostle Paul asserts, that there is *one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. Both Jews and Gentiles have a notion of a Mediator; the Jews[i] call the Messiah אמצעיא, the Mediator, or middle one; and so Philo the Jew[k], speaks of the most ancient Word of God, as *μεσος*, a middle Person between God and men, not unbegotten as God, nor begotten as man, but the middle of the extremes, one between both. The Persians[l] call their God Mithras, *μεσιτης*, a Mediator; and the Dæmons, with the heathens, seem to be, according to them mediators between the superior gods and men; but we have a more sure word of prophecy to direct us in this matter; Christ is the one and only Mediator. It will be proper to enquire,

I. In what sense Christ is the mediator of the covenant; not as Moses who stood between God and the people of Israel, *to shew* them *the word of the Lord*, Deut. v. 5. to receive the law, the lively oracles, and deliver them to them, said to be ordained, or disposed by angels, in the hand of a mediator, supposed to be Moses, Gal. iii. 19. Christ indeed is the revealer and declarer of his Father's mind and will, and the dispenser of the covenant of grace in the different administrations of it, in the several periods of time; but this more properly belongs to him as the *angel* or *messenger of the covenant*, as he is called in Mal. iii. 2. than

[i] R. Joseph Albo, Ikkarim, Orat. 2. c. 28. [k] Quis Rer. Divin. Hæres, p. 509. Vid. ibid. de Cherubim, p. 112. [l] Plutarch. de Isid. & Osir.

he mediator of it. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation; such an one as interposes between two parties at variance, in order to bring them together, and n some way or other reconcile them to each other. A mediator is not of one, f one party; for where there is but one party there can be no difference, and so o need of a mediator; but God is one, he is one party, the offended party, and an is the other, the offending party; and Christ is the mediator between them oth to bring them together, who are through sin at as great distance as earth nd heaven; and he is the antitype of Jacob's ladder, that reaches both and oins them together; the days-man between them, who lays his hand on them oth, and makes peace between them; and so Suidas a learned Grecian interprets the word for mediator by *ειρηνο ποιος*, a peace-maker; and this work he performs not merely by way of intreaty, as one man may intreat another to o lay aside his resentment against an offender, and not pursue him to his destruction, which lies in his power; or as Moses intreated God with great vehemence and importunity to forgive the Israelites, or blot him out of his book; for however commendable this may be for one man to intercede with another, or with God for an offender, in such a manner; yet it seems too low and mean an office for Christ the Son of God, barely to intreat his Father to lay aside the marks of his displeasure against a sinner, and not so honourable for God to grant it, without satisfaction; wherefore Christ acts the part of a mediator, by proposing to his Father to make satisfaction for the offence committed, and so appease injured justice. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction; reconciliation in this way is Christ's great work as mediator; this is what was proposed in covenant, and what he therein agreed to do, and therefore is called the mediator of the covenant.

Reconciliation supposes a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a renewal of it; or a bringing into open friendship again. Man in a state of innocence was in a state of friendship with God, had many high honours and special favours conferred upon him; being made after the image and likeness of God, had all the creatures put in subjection to him, was placed in a delightful garden, had a right to eat of the fruit of all the trees in it but one; to him the creatures were brought to give them names, and an help meet was provided for him; but man being in this honour abode not long, sin soon separated chief friends, and he was drove out of his paradisaical Eden; and appeared to be, as all his posterity are, not only at a distance from God, and alienation to him, but enmity against him, as the carnal mind of man is; and in this state the elect of God were considered, when Christ undertook in covenant to be the mediator of reconciliation for them; and in this condition he found them when he came to make actual reconciliation for them; *you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled*, Col. i. 21. and hereby has brought them into an open state of grace and favour with God; into greater nearness to him, and into a more exalted state of friendship with him than was lost by the fall.

It should be observed. that the elect of God are considered in the covenant of grace as fallen creatures; and that Christ being a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction for them, supposes them such. In the covenant of works there was no mediator; whilst that covenant remained unbroken, and man continued in a state of integrity, he needed none; he could correspond and converse with God without one; though he might have knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, and second person in the Trinity, which was necessary to his worhip of him, yet he knew nothing of him as mediator, nor needed him as such; he could hear the voice of God, and abide in his presence without fear or shame; it was after he had sinned, and not before, that he hid himself among the trees, on hearing the voice of God: nor is there any mediator for angels, none was provided, nor admitted, for the fallen angels, thev were not spared; and the good angels needed not any, having never sinned; they are admitted into the divine presence without a mediator to introduce them; they stand before God, and behold his face continually. Some have thought that Christ is the medium of union of angels with God, and of elect men, chosen in Christ, and considered as unfallen, which I will not object to; but a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction, Christ is only to fallen men, and they needed one; a reconciliation was necessary, and without such a mediator the purposes of God concerning elect men, the covenant of grace made on their account, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the salvation of men, could not have been accomplished; nor the perfections of God, particularly his justice and holiness, glorified in it.

Sin has been committed, which is offensive to God, provoking to the eyes of glory and deserving of his wrath, even of eternal death; the law broken, which reflects dishonour on the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; justice injured and affronted, and which insisted on making a satisfaction, and that nothing less than perfect obedience to the law, and a bearing the penalty of it; fallen man could not make his peace with God, nor reconcile himself to him on such terms; Christ, as mediator of the covenant, undertook to make reconciliation for elect men; and God set him and sent him forth to be, and he is become the propitiation for their sins; and God is pacified towards them for all that they have done, and has taken away all his wrath, and turned himself from the fierceness of his anger, and removed all the visible marks and effects of his displeasure.

Nor is this reconciliation Christ is the Mediator of, as thus stated, any contradiction to the everlasting love of God, to his elect in Christ; where there is the strongest love amongst men, when an offence is committed, there is need of reconciliation to be made. David had the strongest affection for his son Absalom as can well be imagined; Absalom committed a very heinous offence, murdered his brother Amnon, David's first-born, and heir to his crown; he fled from justice, and from his father's wrath and vengeance he might justly fear; Joab became a mediator between them, first more secretly, by means of the woman of Tekoah, and then more openly in his own person, and succeeded so far as to obtain leave that the young man be called from his exile; nevertheless, when returned, David would not admit him into his presence until two years after, when, and not before, a full and open reconciliation was made and declared; and yet all this while the heart of David was towards his son, and continued, even notwithstanding his unnatural rebellion against him. And so the love of God to his people is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably the same: with him there is no shadow of turning; there is no change in God, as not from love to hatred, so not from hatred to love; he is in one mind, and none can turn him, no, not Christ himself; nor was it the work of Christ's mediation, nor the design of it, to turn the heart of God; for that proceeded according to the unalterable and unchangeable will of God; nor did the mediation of Christ procure, nor was it intended to procure the love and favour of God to his elect; so far from it, that itself is the fruit, and effect of that love, John iii. 16. Rom. v. 8. 1 John iv. 10. It was love that set forth and sent forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin; it was owing to the good will and free favour of God, that a Mediator was admitted for sinful men; and it appeared still greater, in providing one to be a Mediator of reconciliaton for them; and the reconciliation the scriptures speak of, as made by the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, is not a reconciliation of God to them, as to his love, but justice; but a reconciliation of them to God; and that not so much of their persons, which are always acceptable and well-pleasing to God, as considered in Christ, in whom they were chosen, as for their sins, Rom. v. 10. 2 Cor. v. 19. Col. i. 20, 21. Heb. ii. 17. and which is no other than a satisfaction for them to divine justice; for the reconciliation of their persons in that way, is not to the love and affections of God, from which they were never separated, but to the justice of God, offended by their sins; and the whole is a reconciliation of the divine perfections to each other in the business of salvation; for though these agree among themselves, yet with respect to that, had different claims to make; the love and grace of God pleaded for mercy, and mercy pleaded for itself, that it might be shewn to the objects of love; but justice insisted on it, that satisfaction be made for the offences committed; the difficulty was how to answer these several pleas; Christ interposed, and offered himself in the covenant, to be a mediator of reconciliation, or to make satisfaction for sin; and so mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Reconciliation then is the principal branch of Christ's office in the covenant as Mediator. Another follows, namely.

His intercession, or advocacy, which proceeds upon reconciliation or satisfaction made; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John ii. 1, 2. and it is his being the propitiation for sin, that is the foundation of his advocacy, or on which is grounded his plea for the remission of it; he is the angel of God's presence, who always appears there for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; he is first the Mediator of reconciliation, and then of intercession; as they are reconciled to God by his sufferings and death, they are saved through his interceding life. He is called the Angel of God's presence, not only because he enjoys it himself; but because he introduces his people into it, and presents their petitions to God, offers up the prayers of all saints, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation; through which they become acceptable to God. Christ is the medium of access to God, to the throne of his grace; there is no drawing nigh of sinful men to God without a Mediator, without him he is a consuming fire; no man can come to the Father but by Christ; he is the only way, the new and the living way; and through him, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, there is access with boldness and confidence. And he is the medium of acceptance, both of persons and services, which are only accepted in the Beloved, and become acceptable through his prevalent mediation and intercession; and he is the medium of conveyance of all the blessings of the covenant of grace to his people, which are all communicated in virtue of his advocacy for them; and he is the medium of the saints communion and fellowship with God now, as he will be the medium of their glory and happiness to all eternity. The next thing to be considered is,

II. The fitness of Christ for his work and office, as the Mediator of the covenant; since a mediator was necessary, and he must be one of the divine Persons in the Trinity; the Son of God being the middle Person in it, seems most proper and suitable to preserve the order, name, and place of the Persons in it: it does not seem so decent, that the first Person should be a Mediator to the second; but rather, since, as Dr. Goodwin expresses it, the suit of trespass was commenced, and ran in the name of the Father, of the first Person for the rest; it seems most agreeable that the reconciliation be made to him by one of the other Persons; and since the second person bears the name of a Son, as the first of a Father, it seems most in character that the Son should mediate with the Father, than the Father with the Son; and since it was proper that the Mediator should become the son of man, as will be seen hereafter, it seems most agreeable that he who is the Son of God, should become the Son of man; otherwise there would be two Sons in the Trinity, or two Persons so called; and for the first or third Person to become a Mediator between God and man, does not seem so becoming, as he who is the second or middle Person among them. Put the principal fitness of Christ for his office, as Mediator, at least for the execution of it, lies in the union of the two natures, human and divine, in his one Person; whereby he is the Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh; and as he partakes of both natures, he has an interest in, and a concern for both; he is fit to be a Mediator between God and man; both to take care of things pertaining to God and his glory, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

I. It was requisite that he should be man, assume human nature into union with his divine Person, even a true body, and a reasonable soul. — 1. That he might be related to those he was a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of; that he might be their brother, their near kinsman, their *Goel*, and so have an apparent right to redeem them, as the near kinsman according to the law, had, Lev. xxv. 48, 49. — 2. That sin might be satisfied for, and reconciliation be made for it, in the same nature which sinned; and whereas, according to the scheme of mediation and salvation by Christ, the same individuals that sinned were not to suffer; it seems requisite and reasonable that an individual of that nature should, in their room and stead, that so it might come as near to what the law required as could be, Gen. ii. 17. — 3. It was proper that the Mediator should be capable of obeying the law, broken by the sin of man: as a divine Person could not be subject to the law, and yield obedience to it; and had he assumed the angelic nature, that would not have been capable of obeying all the precepts of the law, which are required of men; and universal perfect obedience was necessary for the justification of a sinner before God; hence Christ was made of a woman, that he might be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; by which obedience men are made righteous in the sight of God, Gal. iv. 4. Rom. v. 19. — 4. It was meet the mediator should be man, that he might be capable of suffering death; as God he could not die, and had he assumed the nature of an angel, that is uncapable of dying; and yet suffered the penalty of the law, death, was necessary to make reconciliation; a sacrifice for sin was to be offered and therefore it was proper Christ should have somewhat to offer; even a body, and a reasonable soul, which he did offer; peace was to be made by blood, and reconciliation by the sufferings of death, and therefore a nature must be assumed capable of shedding blood, and of suffering death; and without which he could not be made sin, and a curse for men, as the law required he should. In a word, it was highly becoming, that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through suffering, that he might be a perfect Saviour, which could not be, without the assumption of human nature; see Heb. ii. 10—15. and v. 9. and viii. 3. — 5. It was fit the Mediator should be man, that he might be a merciful, as well as a faithful High-Priest, have a fellow-feeling with his people, and sympathize with them under all their temptations, afflictions and distresses, and succour and relieve them, from love and affection to them, as their friend and brother, Heb. ii. 17, 18. and iv. 15. — 6. It was necessary that he should be holy and righteous, free from all sin, original and actual, that he might offer himself without spot to God, take away the sins of men, and be an advocate for them, Heb. vii. 26. and ix. 14. 1 John iii. 5. and ii. 1.

II. It was not enough to be truly man, and an innocent person; he must be more than a man, to be a mediator between God and man; it was requisite, therefore, That he should be God as well as man.—1. That he might be able to draw nigh to God, and treat with him about terms of peace, and covenant with him; all which a mere man could not do; and therefore it is with wonder said, and as expressive of the arduousness of the task, of the difficulty of the work, and of the necessity of a divine Person to do it; *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?* Jer. xxx. 21. to mediate between him and sinful men, to lay his hands on both, and reconcile them together; none but Jehovah's fellow could or dared to do this. — 2. That he might give virtue and value to his obedience and sufferings; for if he had been a mere man, his obedience and righteousness would not have been sufficient to justify men, nor his sufferings and death a proper sacrifice and atonement for sin. But being God as well as man, his righteousness is the righteousness of God; and so sufficient to justify all that believe in him, and them from all their sins; and his blood is the blood of the Son of God, and so cleanses from all sin, and is a proper atonement for it. — 3. Being Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, it naturally and necessarily leads men to put their trust and confidence in him, and rely upon him, for peace, pardon, and salvation; whereas, if he was a mere man, and not God, this would entail a curse upon them; *for cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh his flesh his arm,* Jer. xvii. 5. and even to worship and adore him, and ascribe divine honour and glory to him; which to do would be idolatry, was he not God; for though he that is Mediator is to be worshipped by angels and men, yet not as mediator, but as God; for it is his Deity that is the foundation of worship, and renders him the proper object of it; God will *not give* his *glory to another,* Isai. xlii. 8. not even the glory of being a Mediator to any other but a divine Person; for of Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, are the words spoken, as appears from the whole preceding context: it is necessary that the Mediator should be God, that he might be the proper object of trust, worship, honour, and glory divine.

Nor is it any objection to his being a Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then the Father and the Spirit would be Mediators too, the divine nature being common to them all; since it is not in the divine nature, essentially considered, but as it subsists in the second Person, the Son of God, that Christ is Mediator, and performs his office: and to exercise this office in it, is no lessening and degrading of his Person, since it is a glory that none but a divine Person is fit to bear: and it may be observed, that among men this office is sometimes assumed and exercised by one superior to either of the parties between whom he mediates; and though the Father may be said to be greater than Christ, considered in his office-capacity, yet this does not suppose any subjection and inferiority of his divine Person: nor is it any objection to Christ being Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then he must be a Mediator to himself, or reconcile men to himself; for not to observe, that Christ in his office may be distinguished from himself, as a divine Person; as one may be distinguished from himself as to different circumstances of age, office, &c. there is no impropriety that Christ is a Mediator for himself, or has made reconciliation and satisfaction to himself; for if the Father may be said to reconcile men to himself by his Son, as in 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Col. i. 20. why may not the Son be said to reconcile men to himself, as God, by his sufferings and death as man? There is no impropriety, that if a man has offended a society of men, one of that society should take upon him to be a mediator for him, and reconcile him to that society, though he himself is a part of it, and as such, equally offended as they: or, still nearer to the case in hand, supposing a rebellion in a nation, against the king of it, and this king should have a son, who is heir to his throne, and so must be equally offended with the rebels as his father, and yet should take upon him to be a mediator between his father and the rebels, and make peace between them; where would be the impropriety of it, though he himself, with his father, is the party offended?

The mediation of Christ thus stated, meets with and militates against two errors; one of those, who say he is only a Mediator as to his human nature; and that of others, who assert him to be only a Mediator as to his divine nature. But most certain it is, that there are several acts and works of Christ, as Mediator, in which both natures manifestly appear, and are concerned; not to make mention of the incarnation itself, or Christ's assumption of human nature, which manifestly implies both; for it was a divine Person that partook of flesh and blood, or assumed, not an angelic, but an human nature: it was the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, that was made flesh, and dwelt among men; it was he that was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him, that was found in fashion as a man, and took on him the form of a servant; it was God manifest in the flesh. In the obedience of Christ both natures are to be perceived; not only the human nature, in his being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but the divine nature also; or otherwise, where is the wonder, that *though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered*, Heb. v. 8. and it was that which gave virtue to his obedience, and made it satisfactory to the justice of God, and made the law more honourable than the perfect and perpetual obedience of angels and men could do. In the act of laying down his life for men, both natures appear; the human nature, which is passive in it, and is the life laid down; the divine nature, or the divine Person of Christ, who is active in it, and laid down his life of himself, he having such a power over his life as man, and that at his disposal, as no mere creature ever had; and both are to be observed in his taking of it up again; his human nature, in his body being raised from the dead; his divine nature or person, in raising it up of himself, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power: he was put to death in the flesh, in human nature, and quickened in the Spirit, or by his divine nature; the sacrifice of himself, was his own act, as Mediator; what was offered up were his soul and body, his whole human nature; this was offered by his eternal Spirit, or divine nature, which gave virtue to it, and made it a proper atoning sacrifice for sin. To observe no more, the redemption and purchase of his people, is a plain proof of both natures being concerned in his work as Mediator; the purchase-price, or the price of redemption, is his precious blood, his blood as man; but what gave virtue to that blood, and made it a sufficient ransom-price, is, that it was the blood of him that is God as well as man; and therefore God is said to purchase the church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28.

III. It was not only requisite and necessary, that the Mediator should be God and man, but that he should be both in one Person, or that the two natures should be united in one Person; or, rather, that the human nature should be taken up, and united to, and subsist in the Person of the Son of God; for the human nature, as it has no personality of itself, it adds none to the Son of God; it is no constituent part of his Person; he was a divine Person, before his assumption of human nature; and what he assumed was not a person, but a nature, and is called a thing, nature, seed, Luke i. 35. Heb. ii. 16. had it been a person, there would be two persons in Christ, and so two mediators, contrary to the express words of scripture, 1 Tim. ii. 5. and if the human nature was a person, as it must be a finite one, what was done and suffered by it, must be finite also, and of no use but to that person, and could have no sufficient virtue and value in them to justify men, and atone for sin; but these two natures being in personal union, the works and actions of either, though distinct and peculiar to each, yet belong to the whole Person, and are predicated of it; and so those of the human nature have virtue and efficacy in them, from the personal union, to make them effectual to the purposes for which they were designed, without which they were designed, without which they would be ineffectual. Hence it may be observed, that Christ is described in one nature, by qualities, works, and actions, which belong to him in the other, and is what divines call a communication of idioms, or properties; thus the Lord of glory is said to be crucified; God is said to purchase the church with his blood; and the Son of man is said to be in heaven, while he was here on earth, 1 Cor. ii. 8. Acts xx. 28. John iii. 13. the advantage of this personal union is, that the divine nature has an influence upon, and gives virtue and dignity to whatsoever is done or suffered in the human nature; which is of the utmost concern in the mediation of Christ: nor is it any objection that two natures should influence one and the same action, or be concerned in the production or perfection of it; when it is observed, that the soul and body of man, united together, concur in the performance of the same action, whether good or bad. I shall enquire,

III. How Christ came to be the Mediator of the covenant, even the Mediator of reconciliation in it: it was owing originally, to a thought in the heart of God, the offended Party; whose thoughts were *thoughts of peace, and not of evil,* towards offending man; this affair began with God the Father; *All things are of God,* that is, the Father, as appears by what follows; *Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation*; the doctrine of it, to publish and declare to the world; the sum and substance of which is, *to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,* 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. that is, consulting with Christ his Son, and with him contriving the scheme and method of reconciling to himself the world of his elect, considered as sinful fallen creatures in Adam: upon the first thought of peace and reconciliation, a council of peace was held between the divine

Persons, which issued in a covenant of peace; in which it was proposed to Christ, and he agreed to it, to be the Peace-maker, upon which he was constituted the Mediator of it; *I was set up from everlasting*, Prov. viii. 23. says Christ; that is, by his divine Father; though not without his own consent: or I was anointed, which does not design a collation of any gifts, qualifying him for the office of Mediator, as when he is said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost; only his investiture with that office, so expressed, because the rite of anointing was used in the consecration of kings, priests, and prophets to their office. And God not only set him up, but set him forth, in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be the propitiation for sin, to make reconciliation and satisfaction for it, Rom v. 25. and declared him in prophecy to be the Prince of peace, and the Man that should appear in human nature, and make peace and reconciliation between him and men; he sanctified him, or set him apart to this office before the world began; and in the fulness of time, sent him to be the propitiation, or propitiatory-sacrifice, for the sins of men; and even before his incarnation, being constituted in covenant the Mediator of it, he acted as such, throughout the whole old testament-dispensation: he exercised his several offices then; his Prophetic office, by making known to Adam the covenant of grace, immediately after his fall; by preaching by his Spirit to the disobedient in the times of Noah, the Spirits that were in prison, in the times of the apostle Peter; and by his Spirit, in the prophets testifying beforehand his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow. His Kingly office, in gathering, governing, and protecting his church and people, who acknowledged him as their King, Judge, and Lawgiver: and his Priestly office, through the virtue of his blood reaching backward to the foundation of the world, and therefore said to be the Lamb slain so early, Rev. xiii. 8. and instances they are of his intercession under the former dispensation, Zech. i. 12, 13. and iii. 1—4. the actual existence of Christ's human nature from eternity, was not necessary to his being a Mediator of the covenant; it was enough that he agreed in covenant, to be man in time; that this was known he would be, and was certain he should be; and accordingly he was, from the instant of the covenant-making, reckoned and accounted, and bore the name of the God-man and Mediator, and acted as such. Some parts of his work did not require the actual existence of the human nature; he could draw nigh to God, as Jehovah's fellow without it; he could treat with God about terms of peace, and promise to fulfil them, and covenant with God without it: it no more required the actual existence of his human nature, to covenant with his Father, about the reconciliation and redemption of man, than it required that the Father should assume such a nature to covenant with his Son about the same: there were other parts of Christ's work as Mediator, which required its actual existence; as obedience to the law, and suffering death, the penalty of it; but then, and not before, was it necessary for him to assume it, when the fulness of time was come agreed on, to obey and suffer. It only remains now,

IV. To shew what a Mediator Christ is, the excellency of him, and the epithets which belong to him as such. And, — 1. He is the one and only Mediator; *There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus*; *and* there is no other: the papists plead for other mediators, angels and saints departed: and distinguish between a Mediator of redemption, and a mediator of intercession; the former, they own, is peculiar to Christ, the latter common to angels and saints; but there is no Mediator of intercession, but who is a Mediator of redemption and reconciliation; the instances produced are insufficient, and respect either the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ himself, Zech. i. 12. Rev. viii. 3. or saints, ministers, and members of churches in the present state, and not as departed, Rev. v. 8. and if, Rev. vi. 9. is to be understood of departed spirits, it is only an instance of prayer for themselves, and not for others: the passages in Exod. xxxii. 13. Job v. 1. with others, are quite impertinent. — 2. Christ is a Mediator of men only, not of angels; good angels need not any, and as for evil angels, none is provided nor admitted, as before observed. Yet not of all men; for the world, said to be reconciled to God by Christ, is not all the individuals in it; but the world Christ gave his flesh, or human nature for the of, since there is a world for which he is not so much as a Mediator of intercession, and much less a Mediator of reconciliation; see 2 Cor. v. 19. John vi. 51. and xvii. 9. The persons for whom Christ acted as a Mediator, by means of death, for the redemption of their transgressions, were such as were called, and received the promise of the eternal inheritance, Heb. ix. 15. — 3. Yet he is the Mediator both for Jews and Gentiles; for some of both these are chosen vessels of mercy; and God is a covenant-God, not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also; and Christ is a Propitiation not for the sins of the Jews only, but for the sins of the whole world, or of God's elect throughout the whole world: and therefore both have access to God through the one Mediator, Christ, Rom. ix. 23, 24. and iii. 29, 30. 1 John ii. 2. Eph. ii. 18. — 4. Christ is Mediator both for old and new testament-saints; there is but one Mediator for both, but one Way to the Father, which is Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but one Way of life, peace, reconciliation, and salvation; but one Redeemer and Saviour; but one name given under heaven among men, whereby they can be saved; old and new testament-saints are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus; he is the Foundation of the apostles and prophets. — 5. Christ is a prevalent Mediator, his mediation is always effectual, ever succeeds, and is infallible; as his work was to make peace and reconciliation, and he agreed and engaged to make it; he has made it, the thing is done, and done effectually; and as for his prayers, they are always heard, his intercession ever prevails, and is never in vain; *I knew that thou hearest me always*, John xi. 42. — 6. Christ is an everlasting Mediator; he was Mediator from everlasting, d acted as such throughout the whole old testament-dispensation, and still ntinues; he has an unchangeable priesthood; his blood always speaks peace d pardon, and he ever lives to make intercession; and when his mediatorial ngdom will be completed, and there will be no need of him, either as a lediator of reconciliation or intercession, at least in the manner he has been, d now is; for sin being wholly removed from the saints, even as to the being it, they may have access to God, and he may communicate unto them, ithout the intervention of a Mediator; as is the case of the holy angels; though hrist may be the medium of the glory and happiness of his people to all eter-ty; and since the happiness of the saints will greatly lie in beholding the glo- of Christ as God-man, and the glory of God will be most illustriously dis-ayed in him, it may be admitted: I shall observe no more, only that this of-e of Christ, as Mediator, includes his Kingly, Priestly, and Prophetic offices; l which will be considered in their proper place.

OF CHRIST AS THE SURETY OF THE COVENANT.

HE suretyship of Christ is a branch of his mediatorial office; one way in hich Christ has acted the part of a Mediator between God and men, is by gaging on their behalf, to do and suffer whatever the law and justice of God quired, to make satisfaction for their sins. The Greek word for surety *εγγυος* used but once throughout the whole new Testament, Heb. vii. 22. and there f Christ; where he is said to be made, or become, the Surety of a better Tes-ment, or covenant. And the word is derived either from *εγγυς*, near, because surety draws nigh to one on the behalf of another, and lays himself under bligation to him for that other; thus Christ drew nigh to his Father, and be-ame a Surety to him for them; hence those words, *I will cause him to draw ear, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to ap-roach unto me, saith the Lord?* Jer. xxx. 21. or rather it is derived from *γυιον* hich signifies the hand; because when one becomes a surety, he either puts omething into the hand of another for security, or rather puts his hand into the and of another, or strikes hands with him; a rite much used in suretyship, and is ften put for it, and used as synonymous; see Prov. vi. 1. and xvii. 18. and xxii. 6. Suidas[o] derives it from *γη*, *γης*, the earth, because that is the firmest of the lements, and remains immoveable, and may denote the firmness and security of he promise, or bond, which a surety gives to one for another. The Hebrew word for a surety, in the Old Testament, ערב, Gen. xliii. 9. and elsewhere, as the signification of mixing, because, as Stockius[p] observes, in suretyship ersons are so mixed among themselves, and joined together, that the one is hereby bound to the other; and, upon the whole, Christ, as a Surety, drew nigh to his Father on the behalf of the elect, struck hands with him, and gave him firm security for them, and put himself in their place and stead, and engaged to perform every thing for them that should be required of him; for the better understanding this branch of Christ's office in the covenant, it may be proper to consider,

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[o] In voce *εγγυος*.

[p] Clavis Ling. Sanct. p. 810.

I. In what sense Christ is the Surety of the covenant.

1. He is not the Surety for his Father, to his people, engaging that the promises made by him in covenant shall be fulfilled; which is the Socinian sense of Christ's suretyship[q]; for though the promises were made to Christ, and are Yea and Amen in him; and many of them, such as respect him, were fulfilled in him, and by him, as the minister of the circumcision, Gal. iii. 16. 2 Cor. i. 20. Rom. xv. 8. Yet such is the faithfulness of God that has promised, that there needs no surety for him; his faithfulness is sufficient, which he will not suffer to fail; he is God that cannot lie, nor deny himself; there is no danger of him breaking his word, and not fulfilling his promise, which may be depended on, and strongly confided in: and if his word was not enough, he has joined his oath to it; so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, the heirs of promise might have strong consolation, in believing the fulfilment of every promise made, Heb. vi. 18. Besides, though Christ is equal with his Father, is Jehovah's fellow, and has all the perfections of Deity in him, yet he is not greater than he; and, with reverence to him be it said, he cannot give a greater security, than the word and oath of God, or that will lay a firmer foundation for confidence in the promises of God; and it is with an ill grace these men advance such a notion; since they make Christ to be but a mere man; and what dependence can there be upon him, when cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm? Jer. xvii. 5. and what greater security is it possible that a mere man should give, than what the promise of God itself gives? or what additional strength can a creature give to that, to induce a stronger belief of it? Nor,

II. Is Christ in such sense a Surety, as civilians call a *fidejussor*, or such a surety that is jointly engaged with a debtor, for the payment of a debt; or is so bound for another, as that that other remains under obligation, and the obligation of the surety is only an accession to the principal obligation, which is made stronger thereby, and the creditor has the greater security; yet still the principal debtor is left under his debt, that is not removed from him, and he is under obligation to pay it, if able; and it is first to be demanded of him, or should his surety desert his suretyship, and not make satisfaction. But now none of these things are to be supposed in Christ's suretyship. — 1. He is not a mere accessory to the obligation of his people for payment of their debts; he and they are not engaged in one joint-bond for payment; he has taken their whole debt upon himself, as the apostle Paul did in the case of Onesimus; and he has paid it off, and entirely discharged it alone.

[q] Crellius & Schlichtingius in Heb. vii. 22.

— 2. Nor was any such condition made in his suretyship-engagements for his people, that they should pay if they were able; for God the Father, to whom Christ became a Surety, knew, and he himself, the Surety, knew full well, when this suretyship was entered into, that they were not able to pay, and never would be; yea, that it was impossible for them, in their circumstances, ever to pay; for having failed in their obedience to God, all after acts of obedience, though ever so perfect, could not make amends, or satisfy for that disobedience, since to those God has a prior right; and their failure in obedience, brings upon them a debt of punishment, which is everlasting, and *ad infinitum*; and, if left on them, would be ever paying, and never paid, see Luke vii. 41, 42. Matt. xviii. 24, 25. and v. 26. and xxv. 46. — 3. Nor is such a supposition to be made, that Christ might desert his suretyship, withdraw himself from it; this indeed has been supposed by some: but though Christ was not obliged to become a Surety, he voluntarily engaged in this work, and chearfully took it on him; yet when he had undertaken it he could not relinquish it, without being guilty of disobedience to his Father, and of unfaithfulness to his own engagements; for from the instant he became a Surety for his people, he became a Servant to his Father, and he called and reckoned him as such; *Thou art my servant, O Israel; behold my servant whom I uphold*, Isa. xlix. 3. and xliii. 1. and laid his commands upon him, both to obey his law, and lay down his life for his people, both which he undertook to do, and did perform; or otherwise he could not have had the character of God's righteous Servant, nor would have been faithful to him that appointed him, nor to himself, Isai. liii. 10. Heb. iii. 2. and consequently could not be without sin, which God forbid should ever be said or supposed of the holy Jesus, who did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth; yet this has been supposed of him by some, and the dreadful consequences of it, which have been blasphemously uttered by some schoolmen and popish-writers, not fit to be mentioned. — 4. Nor is it to be supposed, that Christ might not fulfil his suretyship-engagements, or not make satisfaction, as might be expected; since if he did not, it must be either for want of will, or want of power; not of will, since the persons he became a surety for, he bore the strongest affection to; these were the sons of men, in whom was all his delight from everlasting; and such his love to them, that nothing whatever could separate from it: nor could it be for want of power, since, as a divine Person, he is the mighty God; as Mediator, has all power in heaven and in earth; as man, was made strong by the Lord for this work, and had a power, as such, to lay down his life, and take it up again: and should he have deserted his suretyship, and not have made the promised and expected satisfaction, the purposes of God, respecting the salvation of the elect by Christ, must have been frustrated, and made null and void; the council of peace held concerning it would have been without effect; the covenant of grace abolished; the salvation of God's people not obtained, and the glory of God, of his grace, mercy, truth, and faithfulness lost; yea Christ himself must have been deprived of his mediatorial glory; all too shocking to be admitted.

III. Christ is in such sense a Surety, civilians call an *expromissor*, one that promises out and out, absolutely engages to pay another's debt; takes another's obligation, and transfers it to himself, and by this act dissolves the former obligation, and enters into a new one, which civilians call *novation*: so that the obligation no longer lies on the principal debtor, but he is set free, and the Surety is under the obligation, as if he was the principal debtor, or the guilty person. Now this sort of suretyship being most similar, and coming nearest to Christ's suretyship, is made use of to express and explain it; though they do not in every thing tally; for the civil law neither describes nor admits such a Surety among men as Christ is; who so substituted himself in the room and stead of sinners, as to suffer punishment in soul and body for them; but in some things there is an agreement. — 1. Christ, by his suretyship, has took the whole debt of his people upon himself, and made himself solely responsible for it; he has dissolved thereby their obligation to payment or punishment, having taken it on himself; so that they were by it entirely set free from the very instant he became their Surety; it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius[f] observes, that as soon as any one becomes a Surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted: which is the case here; for from henceforward, God the Father looked for his debt, and expected satisfaction of Christ, and let the sinners go free, for whom he engaged; he was gracious, and said, *deliver* them *from going down to the pit; I have found a Ransom*, Job xxxiii. 24. just as when the apostle Paul became a surety for Onesimus; supposing him accepted as such by Philemon, Onesimus was set free; the apostle taking the whole debt and wrong upon himself, and promising to repay and make satisfaction, and which he wrote and signed with his own hand. — 2. When Christ became a Surety for his people, their sins were no longer imputed to them, but were imputed to Christ, were placed to his account, and he became responsible for them; it was not at the time of his sufferings and death, that God laid on him first the iniquities of his people, and they were imputed and reckoned to him, and he accounted them as his own, 2 Cor. v. 19. Isai. liii. 6. Psal. xl. 12. and lxix. 5. by which it appears, that obligation to payment of debts, or punishment, did not lie upon the principal debtor, or guilty person, but upon Christ, who became their Surety; for, — 3. The old testament-saints were really freed from guilt, condemnation, and death, before the actual payment was made by Christ their Surety; some had as full an application of the pardon of their sins, and as clear a view of their interest in Christ's righteousness, as their justifying righteousness before God, as any of the new testament-saints ever had; the one were saved by the grace of Christ as the other; yea, they were received into heaven, and actually glorified, before the suretyship-engagements of Christ were fulfilled, Isai. xliii. 25. and xlv. 24, 25. Acts xv. 11.

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[f] Theolog. Quæst. loc. 31. qu. 6.

Heb. xi. 13—16. So that it is a plain case, that the obligation to payment and punishment lay not on those for whom Christ became a Surety, but was transferred from them to him; unless this absurdity can be admitted, that such an obligation lay on glorified saints, till the actual payment was made by Christ; or that there was a *limbus patrum*, as the papists say, where the saints, before Christ's coming, were detained; but were detained; but were set free by him when he came. — 4. It is certain that the old testament-saints had knowledge of the suretyship engagements of Christ, and prayed and pleaded for the application of the benefits of them to them, Job xix. 25. Psal. cxix. 122. Isai. xxxviii. 14. and which they enjoyed: and such was the dignity of Christ's person, and his known faithfulness to his engagements, and the eternity of them, which with God has no succession, they were always present with him, and in full view, as if actually performed; before and after made no difference in the sight of God, with whom a thousand years are as one day and eternity itself as but a moment. And now, from this suretyship of Christ arise both the imputation of sin to Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness to his people; this is the ground and foundation of both, and on which the priestly office of Christ stands, and in virtue of which it is exercised, 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vii. 20—22. I proceed,

II. To consider what Christ as a Surety, engaged to do,

1. He engaged to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for the wrong and injury done by them; this may be illustrated by the instance of the apostle Paul engaging for Onesimus; which is thus expressed, *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account; I Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it*, Philem. 18, 19. Sin is a wrong and injury done to divine justice, and to the holy law of God broken by it; which Christ undertook to satisfy for; and sins are debts, see Matt. vi. 12. compared with Luke xi. 4. not proper ones, for then they might be committed with impunity, since it is right and commendable to pay debts: but in an improper sense, as debts oblige to payment, so sins to punishment; even to endure the curse of the law, and death eternal, the sanction of it: these debts, or sins, are infinite objectively, as they are contracted and committed against an infinite being, and require punishment of a creature *ad infinitum*; and therefore not to be paid off, or answered by a finite creature; but Christ being an infinite Person, as God, was able to pay of those debts, and anwered for those sins, and engaged to do it, and has done it.

There is a twofold debt paid by Christ, as the Surety of his people; the one is a debt of obedience to the law of God; this he engaged to do when he said, *Lo, I come to do thy will; thy law is within my heart:* and accordingly he was made under the law, and yielded perfect obedience to it, by which his people are made righteous; and the other is a debt of punishment, incurred through failure of obedience in them; the curse of the law he has endured, the penalty of it, death; and by paying both these debts, the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled in his people, considered in him their head and Surety. Now let it be observed, that these debts are not pecuniary ones, though there is an allusion to such, and the language is borrowed from them; but criminal ones, a wrong and injury done, as supposed in the case of Onesimus; and are of such a nature as deserve and require punishment in body and soul, being transgressions of the righteous law of God; and God is to be considered, not merely as a creditor, but as the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right, and who will by no means clear the guilty, without a satisfaction to his justice; and yet there is a mixture of grace, mercy, and goodness in God, with his justice in this affair, by admitting a Surety to obey, suffer and die, in the room and stead of his people, which he was not obliged unto; nor does the law give the least hint of an allowance of it; nor do the civil laws of men admit of any such thing, that an innocent person should suffer death in the room of one that is guilty, even though he consents to it, and desires it; because no man has a power over his own life, to dispose of it at pleasure; but God, who can dispense with his own law, if he pleases, has thought fit to explain it, and put a construction on it in favour of his people, where it is not express; and allow of a commutation of persons, that his Son should stand in their law-place and stead, obey, suffer, and die for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is owing to his sovereign grace and mercy; nor is at all inconsistent with his justice, since Christ fully consented to all this, who is the Prince of life, and had power over his own life, as man, to lay it down, and take it up again; and since justice is fully satisfied, by the obedience and death of Christ, and the law magnified and made honourable, and more so than it could have been by all the obedience and sufferings of angels and men put together.

II. Another thing which Christ as a Surety engaged to do, was to bring all the elect safe to glory; this may be illustrated by Judah's suretyship for Benjamin; thus expressed to his father, *I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever*, Gen. xliii. 9. And thus Christ became a Surety to his Father, for his beloved Benjamins, the chosen of God, and precious; as he asked them of his Father, and they were given into his hands, to be preserved by him, that none of them might be lost; he agreed that they should be required of his hand, every one of them, and pass under the hand of him that telleth them, and their whole number appear complete, and none missing; as will be the case, when he shall say, *Lo, I, and the children which God hath given me*, Heb. ii. 13. Christ engaged to bring his people to his Father; this was the work proposed to him, and which he agreed to do; *to bring Jacob again to him, and to restore the preserved of Israel*, Isai. xlix. 5, 6. to recover the lost sheep, to ransom them out of the hands of him that was stronger than they; to redeem them from all iniquity, and from the law, its curse and condemnation, and save them with an everlasting salvation, and bring them safe to his Father in heaven; and because he laid himself under obligation to do all this; hence he says, *them* *lso I must bring*, into his fold here, and into heaven and glory hereafter, John . 16. and set them before his Father; as he did at his death, when all the elect vere gathered together in one Head, even in him, to present them in the body f his flesh, through death, holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in the sight f God; and as he now does in heaven, where he appears in the presence of od for them, and they are set down in heavenly places in him, as their Head nd Surety; and as he will at the last day, when he will deliver up the kingdom the Father, the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of priests, complete and erfect, as he received them; and having first presented them to himself, as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, he will present them faultless before e presence of his Father's glory, with exceeding joy; and will be so far from earing any blame, having so fully discharged his suretyship engagements, that e will appear without sin unto salvation; even without sin imputed, without e wrong done by his people put on his account; all being fully answered for ccording to agreement.

OF CHRIST AS THE TESTATOR OF THE COVENANT.

THE covenant of grace bears the name, and has the nature of a testament: it s often called the new and better testament, as administred under the gospel-ispensation, Matt. xxvi. 28. Heb. vii. 22. and ix. 15. in distinction from the ormer: it is called a testament, in allusion to the last will and testament of nen. And — 1. Because it is the will of God, himself, and not another; the vill of him that is sovereign and absolute, who does according to his will in eaven and in earth, in nature, providence, and grace. The covenant is found n the will of God, and is the pure effect of it; he was not obliged to make it; e freely and of his own accord came into it; so all the contracting parties in it, s has been before observed. A man's will or testament ought to be voluntary; e is not to be forced nor drawn, nor pressed to make it, contrary to his incliation; or otherwise it is not his own will. The covenant, or testament of od, is of his own making, without any influence from another; all the artiles in it are of his free good will and pleasure; as, that he will be the coveant-God of his people; that they shall be his sons and daughters; that they hall be his heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ: that they shall enjoy all the blessngs of grace, redemption, pardon, justification, regeneration, perseverance in grace and glory; for he hath bequeathed, in this will, both grace and glory to his people, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. Luke xii. 32. — 2. As a will consists of various legacies to various persons, so does the covenant of grace; some to Christ, for he, under different considerations, is a legatee in it, and a testator of it: all the elect, his spiritual seed and offspring, are bequeathed unto him, as his portion and inheritance, and with which he is greatly delighted, Deut. xxxii. 9. Psal. ii. 8. and xvi. 6. *As my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom*, says he, Luke xxii. 29. his mediatorial kingdom, a kingdom of priests, and which he disposed of to him in a testamentary-way, as the word there used signifies. There are other legacies, such as before suggested, respecting grace and glory, left in this will for the brethren of Christ, among whom he is the first born, and so appointed principal heir, yea, heir of all things, and they joint-heirs with him; and what is given to them, is in trust with him for them, particularly the inheritance bequeathed, which they obtain in him, and is reserved with him in heaven for them. — 3. In wills, what a man disposes of, is, or should be, his own; no man has a power to dispose, nor ought to dispose of, what is another's, or not his own; or otherwise, his will is a void will, and such bequests void bequests. All the blessings of goodness, whether of nature, providence, or grace, are all the Lord's own, and he has a sovereign right to dispose of them as he pleases, and to give them to whomsoever he will; and against which no one has any just cause or reason to object; and if he does, it is to no purpose; *Is it not lawful for me*, says the Testator of the covenant, *to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?* Matt. xx. 15. — 4. This will, or testament, of Jehovah, is an ancient one, it was made in eternity; it is called an everlasting covenant, or testament; not only because it always continues, and will never become null and void, but because it is from everlasting; the bequests and donations made in it, were made before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. it is indeed, sometimes called a new testament, not because newly made, but because newly published and declared, at least in a more clear and express manner; a new and fresh copy of it has been delivered out to the heirs of promise. — 5. It is a will or testament that is unalterable; *Though it be but a man's covenant*, or testament, *yet if it be confirmed* by his own hand-writing and seal, and especially by his death, *no man disanulleth or addeth thereunto*, Gal. iii. 15. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; this testament, or will is founded upon the immutability of the divine counsel; so that the heirs of promise. the legatees in it, may have strong consolation, and be fully assured of enjoying their legacies in it; which are the sure mercies of David, of David's Son and Antitype, as all the promises of it are Yea and Amen in him. — 6. Testaments, or wills, are generally sealed, as well as signed: the seals of God's will or testament are not the ordinances; circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace; it was a seal to Abraham, and to him only, that he should be the father of believing Gentiles; and that the same righteousness of faith should come upon them, which came upon him, when in uncircumcison: nor is baptism, which is falsely said to come in the room of it, and much less is it a seal of the covenant; nor the ordinance of the Lord's supper; for though the blood of Christ, one of the symbols in it is, yet not that itself: but the seals are the holy Spirit of God, and the blood of Christ; and yet the holy Spirit is not such a seal that makes the covenant, or testament, surer in itself, only assures the Lord's people of their interest in it, by witnessing it to their spirits, by being in them the earnest of the inheritance bequeathed them, and by sealing them up unto the day of redemption; properly speaking, the blood of Christ is the only seal of this testament, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and therefore called the blood of his covenant, and the blood of the new testament, Zech. ix. 11. Matt. xxvi. 28. Heb. xiii. 20. — 7. To all wills there are commonly witnesses, and often three, and in some cases three are required. Now as God sware by himself, because he could sware by no greater; so because no other and properer witnesses could be had, to witness this will made in eternity, God himself, or the three divine Persons, became witnesses to it, the Three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost, 1 John v. 7. Unless we choose to conceive of things in this manner; that as the Father, the irst Person, gives the lead in all things in nature and in grace, and as he did in he council of peace, so in the covenant of grace, or in this testament, he may e considered as the maker of the will, or testament, and the Son and Spirit as witnesses to it. — 8. This will, or testament, is registered in the sacred writings, rom thence the probat of it is to be taken; the public notaries, or amanuenis, that have copied it under a divine direction, are the prophets and apostles; ence the writings of the one are called the Old Testament, and the writings of the other the New Testament, the latter being the more clear, full, and corect coy.

The covenant of grace having the nature of a testament, shews that there is o restipulation in it on the part of men; no more than there is a restipulation of legatees in a will; what is bequeathed to them being without their knowedge and consent, and without any thing being required of them, to which they give their assent. The covenant of grace is properly a covenant to Christ, in which he restipulates; but a testament to his people, or a pure covenant of promise. Also it may be observed, that the legacies in this testament, are owng to the good will of the testator, and not to any merit in the legatees: *For if hey which are of the law be heirs*, if they that seek eternal life by the works of he law be heirs of grace and glory, then, says the apostle, *faith is made void, nd the promise made of none effect*, which declare it to be a free donation: and o again, *If the inheritance be of the law*, or to be obtained by the works of it, *t is no more of promise*; these will not consist with, but contradict one anther; but God gave it to Abraham by promise; as he has done to all the legatees in his covenant or will; see Rom. iv. 14. Gal. iii. 18.

I. The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, may be considered as testator of he covenant of grace, as it is a will or testament, and which is plainly suggested in Heb. ix. 15 — 17. for, — 1. Christ as God has an equal right to dispose of hings as his divine Father, seeing all that the Father has are his; as all the perections of deity, so all persons, and all things in nature, providence and grace; particularly all the blessings of grace and glory. He is over all God blessed for ever, and all things are of him and owe their being to him, and are at his disposal; yea all things are delivered by the Father to him as mediator: and if the Spirit disposes of his gifts and graces, dividing them to every man severally as he will; the Son of God may be reasonably thought to have a power and right to dispose of the blessings of his goodness to whomsoever he pleases. — 2. Nothing is disposed of in the covenant, or testament, without his counsel and consent; for though with respect to creatures, angels and men, it may be said of God, with whom took he counsel? yet with his Son, the Wonderful, Counseller, the Angel of the great council, he did; for the counsel of peace was between them both, the Father and the Son, which respected the salvation of men, and the donation of grace and glory to them. — 3. Nor was any thing given in covenant, or disposed of in the will and testament of God, but with respect to the death of Christ; all promises in covenant was on condition of Christ's making his soul an offering for sin, and of pouring out his soul unto death, Isai. liii. 10—12. all the blessings of grace bestowed on Old Testament-saints, as they were legacies in this testament, so they were given forth in virtue of the blood of the covenant, which had a virtue that reached backward; Christ being the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and there is no blessing of grace in the covenant, but what is on account of the death of Christ the testator; redemption of transgressions, that were under both the first and second testaments, was by means of death; and without shedding of blood there was no remission under either dispensation; and it is the death of Christ that secures from condemnation, as well as by it reconciliation is made. — 4. Whatever is given in this will, is given to Christ first, to be disposed of by him, so that he is the executor as well as the testator of it: he was set up as mediator from everlasting; was prevented with the blessings of goodness, or had them first given to him; he was possessed of a fulness of grace, and grace was given to the elect in him before the world began; not only the blessings of grace were put into his hands to dispose of, but eternal life, for he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; whether this be considered as an inheritance which He, the Word of God's grace, the essential Word, is able to give among them that are sanctified by faith in him; or as a kingdom prepared for them in the purposes of God, and which Christ gives a right unto, and a meetness for; yea he himself disposes of it in a testamentary way, *and I appoint unto you a kingdom*, dispose of it to you by will and testament, Luke xxii. 29. Wherefore,

II. The death of Christ is necessary to put this will in force, to give strength unto it, that it may be executed according to the design of the maker of it; *for where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, whilst the testator liveth*, Heb. ix. 16, 17. It is not the death of any, only of the testator himself, that gives validity to his will, or renders it executable; and it is only the death of Christ that gives forth and strength unto, or ratifies and confirms the covenant of grace; not the death of slain sacrifices, for though by the blood and death of these the first testament was dedicated, ratified and confirmed in a typical way, as these were types of Christ in his blood-shed and death, Heb. ix. 19—22. yet the new testament is only, really, truly and properly ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ itself; and whereas the Father and the Spirit were jointly concerned with Christ in making this will or testament, it was not necessary that they should die, nor could they, since they never assumed a nature capable of dying; only it was necessary that one of the testators should assume a nature capable of death, and in it die to give force to this will; and infinite wisdom judged it most proper and fitting that the Son of God should do it, who took upon him, not the nature of angels, who are incorporeal, immaterial and immortal spirits, and die not; but he became a partaker of flesh and blood, of human nature, that he might die and ratify the testament and will he has concerned in the making of; and this was necessary to give it strength and force: not as if it was alterable until the death of Christ, as the wills of men are until their death, which while they live as liable to be altered again and again; for the first thoughts of God always remain, and that to all generations; his mind is never turned, his counsel is immutable, and so his covenant and testament founded thereon is unalterable; nor that the inheritance bequeathed in this will could not be enjoyed before the death of Christ; this indeed is the case with respect to the wills of men, the legacies are not payable, nor estates bequeathed enjoyed, until the testator dies; but such is not only the certainty of Christ's death, and which with God was as if it was, before it really was, but such is the virtue and efficacy of it, that it reaches backward to the beginning of the world, as before observed: wherefore the Old Testament saints not only received the promise of eternal inheritance, but enjoyed it before the death of Christ, though in virtue of it, for they are said to inherit the promises, that is the things promised, Heb. ix. 15. and vi. 12. but the death of Christ was necessary to confirm the covenant or testament, that the legatees might appear to have a legal right to what was bequeathed to them, law and justice being satisfied thereby; so that no caveat could be put in against them, and no obstruction made to their claim of legacies, and their enjoyment of them; and no danger of this will being ever set aside. There is another concern and part which Christ has in the covenant, and that is the messenger of it, Mal. iii. 1. but as that respects the administration of it, it will be considered in its proper place, after the fall of man.

OF THE CONCERN THE SPIRIT OF GOD HAS IN THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

HAVING considered the parts which the Father and the Son have taken in the covenant, the part which the holy Spirit has in it is next to be treated of, who was not a mere by-stander, spectator and witness of this solemn transaction, compact and agreement, between the Father and the Son, but was a party concerned in it.

I. The third person, the Spirit, gave his approbation of, and assent unto, every article in the covenant. — 1. In general, what respected the salvation of the chosen ones; for that is the grand and principal article of the covenant; this, says David, speaking of the covenant, *is all my salvation*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. that is, the whole of his salvation; all things relative to it were provided for in it, and secured by it; in the œconomy of which each Person took his part; and that of the Spirit is sanctification; which makes meet for the enjoyment of complete and eternal salvation; hence called *the sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2. And this clearly shews, that the Spirit approved of, and assented to the whole scheme of salvation, or of the thing itself in general; or otherwise he would never have taken a part in it; and as it was the purpose and will of God the Father to save men by his Son, and he appointed them to obtain salvation by him; so the Son of God came to seek and save men, being sent of God for that purpose; in which mission of him the Spirit joined; *Now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me*, Isai. xlviii. 16. which is a plain proof that he approved of, and assented to it, that the Son of God should be the Saviour of men; and whereas it was proper that the Son of God should assume human nature, and in it work out the salvation of men; and which was agreed upon between the Father and the Son; so it was approved of and assented to by the Spirit; as appears from his concern in the incarnation of Christ; for what was *conceived in the virgin was of the Holy Ghost*, Matt. i. 18, 20. and, and seeing it was necessary that the Saviour of men should suffer and die for them, to satisfy law and justice; and the divine Father enjoined his Son to lay down his life for them; to which command he became obedient; so the Spirit declared his approbation of it, by testifying beforehand, in the prophets, *the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*; as well as was assisting to the human nature of Christ, in the sacrifice of himself; since it was *through the eternal Spirit*, he offered up himself without spot to God, 1 Pet. i. 11. Heb. ix. 14. Once more, as it was highly proper, that as Christ should be delivered to death for the offences of men, so that he should rise again for their justification; or otherwise, the whole affair of salvation would have miscarried; hence the Father in covenant enjoined his Son, as to lay down his life, so to take it up again; and which he did, and in which the Spirit was concerned; and which shewed his approbation of this closing part of the scheme of salvation by Christ; see Rom. i. 4. — 2. The Spirit of God approved of, and assented to all the promises in the covenant; there are many exceeding great and precious promises in the scriptures, which are transcribed from the covenant, and are all Yea, and Amen in Christ, and in which the Spirit has a concern; hence he is called *the holy Spirit of promise*, Eph. i. 13. indeed, he himself is the great promise of the covenant; promised both to Christ the Head and to his members, Matt. xii. 18. Isai. xlii. 1. and xliv. 3. Gal. iii. 14. and he is concerned in the application of every promise to the elect; it is he that remembers to them the word of promise, on which the Lord has sometimes caused them to hope; and it is he that opens the promise to them, instructs them in it, and shews them what is contained in it, the nature, use, and suitableness of it; it is he that applies the promises to them at a proper season, when they are like apples of God in pictures of silver; and he it is that keeps up their faith and hope, as to the grand promise of eternal life; so that they, *through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness, by faith*, John xiv. 26. Prov. xxv. 11. Gal. v. 5. by which it appears, that he approved of every promise of the covenant made in eternity, or he would never act the part he does, in the application of them in time. — 3. The blessed Spirit approved of, and gave his assent to all the grants made to Christ, and to his people in the covenant, to the sure mercies of David, to the spiritual blessings wherewith the elect are blessed in heavenly places in Christ; for he takes of these in time, and shews them to the persons interested in them, and their interest therein, John xvi. 14. which he would not do, if he had not approved of the grants of these blessings to them, in the everlasting covenant; as for instance, the blessing of a justifying righteousness, to be wrought out by Christ, was provided in the covenant; and which being brought in, is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith: and besides the external revelation of it in the gospel, the Spirit of God brings near this righteousness, and sets it in the view of an awakened sinner, and shews him its suitableness, fulness, and excellency, works faith in him to receive it, and pronounces in his conscience his justification by it; hence it is said of such, that they are *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Pardon of sin is another blessing of the covenant, through Christ, and the Spirit takes the blood of Christ, the blood of the covenant shed for the remission of sin, and sprinkles it on the conscience, and thereby speaks peace and pardon to it; saying, *Son* or *daughter, be of good chear, thy sins are forgiven thee*, Heb. viii. 12. and x. 22. and xii. 24. Adoption also, a blessing of grace, provided in the covenant, and which the Spirit bears witness to, and makes application of, and his sent down into the hearts of the covenant and adopted ones for that purpose, and is hence called *the Spirit of adoption*, 2 Cor. vi. 18. Gal. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 15, 16. In short, all the grace given to the elect in Christ, before the world began, all the things that are freely given them of God in the covenant, the Spirit in time makes known unto them, and declares and testifies their interests in them, 1 Cor. i. 12. and ii. 9—11. All which abundantly prove his approbation of, and assent unto every thing contained in the covenant of grace.

II. There are many things which the holy Spirit himself undertook and engaged in covenant to do; and nothing more strongly proves this than his doing them; for had he not agreed to do them, they would not have been done by him.

1. Some things he has done, as he agreed to do, with respect to Christ; he formed the human nature of Christ, in which he obeyed and suffered for the salvation of the elect; every individual of human nature is, indeed, made by him; *The Spirit of God hath made me*, says Elihu, Job xxxiii. 4. but the individual of Christ's human nature, was fearfully and wonderfully made by him, as David, personating him, says he was, in secret, and curiously wrought in the

lowest parts of the earth, in the womb of the virgin, according to the model of it, in the book of God's purposes and decrees; it was produced by the power of the Highest, the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, without the instrumentality of man; and so was free from the pollution of sin, propagated by ordinary and natural generation, and therefore called the holy thing, born of the virgin, Psal. cxxxix. 14—16. Luke i. 35. The Spirit of God filled the same human nature with his gifts and graces without measure, which are the oil of gladness he anointed him with above his fellows, and thereby fitted and qualified him as man, for the discharge of his office as Mediator, Isai. xi. 1—3. and xlii. 1. and lxi. 1. he descended upon him as a dove at his baptism; which was the signal by which John the Baptist knew he was the Messiah, and pointed him out as such to others; he assisted him as man, in the ministry of the gospel, whereby he spake as never man did, and with an authority the Scribes and Pharisees did not; and in the performance of miracles; for he cast out devils, as he himself says, by *the Spirit of God*, Matt. xii. 28. He also was concerned in Christ's offering up himself a Sacrifice; and in his resurrection from the dead, as before observed; whereby he glorified him, as well as by other things, Christ said he would, John xvi. 14. All which he did according to covenant-agreements and settlements.

II. There are other things he has done, as he agreed to do, with respect to men in a public office and capacity; as the prophets of the old Testament, whom he inspired to speak and write as they did, 2 Pet. i. 21. and the apostles of the New, who were endowed with power from on high, with his extraordinary gifts to preach the gospel, in all languages, to all people, and to confirm it with miracles, Acts i. 4, 5. and Heb. ii. 3, 4. and ordinary ministers of the word in all succeeding generations, with gifts and grace suitable to their office; whom he calls and separates to it, directs where they should go, he has work for them to do, and makes them overseers of flocks or churches committed to their care. Acts xiii. 2. and xvi. 6, 7. and xx. 28. and it is he that makes the word preached by them effectual to the conviction and conversion of sinners, and to the comfort and edification of saints; and whereby he conveys himself into the hearts of men, 1 Thess. i. 5, 6. 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8. Gal. iii. 2.

To such as are in a private capacity, he is, — 1. A Spirit of conviction; he convinces them of sin, original, actual, of all their sins of thought, word, and deed; of the demerit of sin, and of the inability of men to make atonement for it; and brings them to such a sense of it, as to loath it, and themselves for it; to blush and be ashamed of it, and to have such a godly sorrow for it, which works repentance unto salvation. And of righteousness; of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; and of the excellency and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ. And of Judgment; that there is one not to be escaped, and at which all must appear, and in which there will be no standing, but in the righteousness of Christ, John xvi. 9. — 2. A Spirit of regeneration and renovation; men must be born again, and they that are born of God, even of the Spirit of God, are renewed by him in the spirit of their minds; all things are made new; a new man is created in them, a new heart and a new spirit are given unto them, according to the covenant of grace; hence we read of regeneration, and *the renewing of the holy Spirit*, Tit. iii. 15. — 3. A Spirit of faith; all men have not faith, only God's elect; and therefore true faith is called the faith of God's elect; and those that have it, have it not of themselves, it is the gift of God; it is of the operation of God, a work of his almighty power, begun, carried on, and performed with power, and that by the Holy Ghost; and therefore he is called *the Spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. iv. 14. — 4. A Comforter, under which character he is often spoke of, and promised by Christ, that he should be sent by him, and from his Father, according to covenant-agreements; and which office, as he freely undertook in covenant, he performs, by shedding abroad the love of God and Christ in the hearts of his people; by leading into the comfortable doctrines of the gospel; by opening and applying the precious promises of it; by taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to them; and by witnessing to them their adoption; and by being the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them up unto the day of redemption. — 5. A Sanctifier; if any are sanctified, it is by the Spirit of God, sanctification is his work, and therefore called the sanctification of the Spirit, as before observed: it is the Spirit that begins, and carries on, and finishes the work of grace and holiness upon the hearts of God's elect, without which no man shall see the Lord. He is the Spirit of strength to the saints, to enable them to exercise grace, and to perform duties; he is put into them according to the covenant of grace, to cause them to walk in the statutes and judgments of the Lord to do them; to strengthen them to walk on in the ways of the Lord, and to persevere in faith and holiness to the end. And all this the Spirit of God does, as he engaged and undertook to do, in the everlasting covenant; and therefore he is said to come, being sent to do these things; not without his will and consent, but according to his voluntary engagements in covenant, without which he could not be sent by the Father and the Son, being equal to them; and this will account for the several passages where he is said to be sent by the Father, in the name of Christ, and by Christ, from the Father, John xiv. 16, 26. and xv. 26. and xvi. 7. Gal. iv. 6. This being all agreed on and settled in the covenant between them.

OF THE PROPERTIES OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

I SHALL close the account of the covenant of grace, with the epithets or properties of it; which may serve to lead more fully and clearly into the nature, use, and excellency of it; and which may in some measure be collected from what has been already observed.

I. It is an eternal covenant; not merely as to duration, being what will continue to eternity, and so is called an everlasting covenant, but as to the original of it; it was made in eternity, and commenced and bears date from eternity. The spring of it is the mercy, grace and love of God; I said, says God, Mercy shall be built up for ever; there shall be such a display of it, as shall always abide; and in order to this it follows, I have made a covenant with my chosen, with Christ, and the elect in him; which is a standing everlasting monument of mercy; and now the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting, not only as an attribute of God, but in the display of it to sinful miserable creatures; and where is there a display of it so early but in the covenant? Psal. lxxxix. 2, 3, 28. and ciii. 17. and which mercy is no other than the love and free favour of God exercising itself in such a manner towards sinful men; and which love, as it was bore to Christ, so to his people in him, before the foundation of the world, John xvii. 23, 24. The basis of the covenant, is God's election of men to eternal life; the foundation of God, which stands sure, and which laid a foundation for the covenant of grace; it is built upon it; the covenant is made with Christ, God's elect, and with men chosen in him, and who were chosen in him to be holy and happy, before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. The council of peace, which was introductory to the covenant of grace, was of old, from everlasting; as all the counsels of God are; in this Christ was the everlasting Counsellor; as well as in the covenant the everlasting Father: God was in Christ from eternity, forming the scheme of man's peace, reconciliation, and salvation; which prepared and furnished sufficient matter for the everlasting covenant: Christ was set up as the Mediator of it from everlasting; from the beginning, or ever the earth was; his goings forth in it, in acts of love and grace towards his people, were of old, from everlasting; drawing nigh to his divine Father, and becoming their Surety, interposing between him and them as Mediator, engaging to do every thing for them law and justice could require; and receiving, on their account, all grants and promises made unto them, Prov. viii. 23. Mic. v. 3. The blessings of the covenant were put into the hands of Christ so early, and the elect were blessed with them in him, as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and are the grace given to them in him *before the world began*, Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. There were also promises made, particularly the grand promise of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world was; and which promise of life is in Christ, as all the promises of the covenant are, being put into his hands so early; the heirs of them not having an actual being, yet a representative one in him their Head, Tit. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 1.

Now all this proves the antiquity of the covenant of grace; nor is it any objection to it, that it is sometimes called the second and new covenant, Heb. viii. 7, 8, 13. and ix. 15. and xii. 24. for it is so called, not with respect to the covenant of works, made with Adam, as if it was the second to that, and newer and later than that; for it was made long before that, even in eternity, as has been shewn; but the distinctions of first and second, old and new, respect the different administrations of the same covenant of grace in time: the first administration of it began immediately after the fall of Adam, and continued under the patriarchs, and under the Mosaical dispensation, unto the coming of Christ; and then a new administration of it took place, which made the first old, and is called the second, with respect to that; and yet both, for substance, are the the same covenant, made in eternity, but variously administered in time.

There are several time-covenants made with men; as with Adam, Noah, Abraham, the children of Israel, Phinehas, David, &c. But the covenant made with Christ, and the elect in him, was not made in time, but in eternity. It is a notion that commonly obtains, that God makes a covenant of grace with men when they believe, repent, &c. but it is no such thing; the covenant of grace does not then begin to be made, only to be made manifest; it then openly takes place, its blessings are bestowed, its promises applied, its grace is wrought in the hearts of men, when God puts his fear there, gives a new heart, and a new spirit, and puts his own Spirit there, to work faith, repentance, and every other grace; but then the covenant is not new made, but all this is done in virtue and in consequence of the covenant of grace made in eternity, and according to the tenor of that.

II. The covenant of grace is entirely free, it is altogether of free grace; grace is the moving cause of it: God was not induced to make it from any motive and condition in men. The several parties entered freely into it; the Father, of his own grace and good will to men, proposed the terms of the covenant to his Son; and the Son of God, from his great love he bore to the same persons, voluntarily agreed unto them: and the same love in the blessed Spirit, engaged him to undertake what he did in it; hence we read, as of the love of the Father, and of the love of the Son, so of the love of the Spirit, Rom. xv. 30. which love of the three divine Persons, no where more clearly and fully appears than in the covenant of grace, and the performance of it. The act of election, which is the basis of the covenant, on which it proceeds, and to which it is commensurate, is entirely of grace, and not of works, and therefore called *the election of grace*, Rom. xi. 5, 6. the matter, sum and substance of the covenant is of grace; the blessings of it are all of grace, they all go by the name of grace, given in Christ before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. Adoption is owing to the free favour of God; a justifying righteousness is the gift of his grace; pardon of sin is according to the riches of his grace; and so every other blessing. The promises of it, which are exceeding great and precious, flow from the grace of God: when promises are made, the faithfulness of God is engaged to fulfil them; but it is of his grace and good will that he makes them; he is not obliged to make promise of any thing to his creatures. The grace of God greatly appears in making faith the recipient of all blessings and promises; which itself is not of men, but is the gift of God; and by divine wisdom is put in the place it is, to receive all the blessings and promises of the covenant; that it might be by grace; that it might appear that all is of grace; to this end the promise, and so every blessing, *might be sure to all the seed*, Rom. iv. 16. The end of making the covenant is, the glory of the grace of God; as God has made all things for himself, for his own glory, in nature and providence; so all things in grace, and particularly the covenant of grace, is made and stored with all the blessings of it, to the glory of his grace, Eph. i. 3—6. and therefore with great propriety may, on all accounts, be called the covenant of grace.

III. This covenant is absolute and unconditional: the covenant of works is conditional: Adam, according to it, was to continue in that happy state in which he was created and put, whilst he obeyed the voice of God, and abstained from the forbidden fruit; but if he eat of that, he was to be stript of his happiness, and die; the language of that covenant is, Do this and live; if obedient to it, then blessing and life; but if disobedient, then cursing and death. The covenant God made with Abraham and his seed, concerning their having the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, was conditional; if willing and obedient, and so long as they behaved themselves well, according to the laws of God given them, they were to possess it, and enjoy the good things of it, Isai. i. 19. but if otherwise, to be dispossessed of it; and accordingly, when they broke the laws of God, their neighbouring nations were let in upon them, and harassed and distressed them, or they were carried captive by them out of it; as, first by the Assyrians, then by the Chaldeans, and at last by the Romans; in which state they now are. But not such is the covenant of grace, that is without any conditions on the part of men. Some, indeed, make it to be a conditional covenant, and faith and repentance to be the conditions of it. But these are not conditions, but blessings of the covenant, and are as absolutely promised in it, as any thing else; the promise of a new heart, and of a new spirit, includes the gift of faith, and every other grace; and that of taking away the stony heart, and giving an heart of flesh, is fully expressive of the gift of the grace of repentance, Ezek. xxvi. 26. Besides, if these were conditions of the covenant, to be performed by men in their own strength, in order to be admitted into it, and receive the benefits of it; they would be as hard, and as difficult to be performed, as the condition of the covenant of works, perfect obedience; since faith requires, to the production of it, almighty power, even such as was put forth in raising Christ from the dead, Eph. i. 19, 20. and though God may give men means, and time, and space of repentance, yet if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will. Christ's work, and the Spirit's grace, supersede all conditions in the covenant, respecting men; since they provide for every thing that can be thought of, that is required or is wanting: Christ's work of redemption, atonement, and satisfaction for sin, as has been observed, is the only condition of the covenant; and that lies on the Mediator and Surety of the covenant, and not on the persons for whose sake it is made; *When thou shalt make his soul*, or, *if his soul shall make an offering for sin*, Isai. liii. 10. then such and such things are promised in the covenant, both to him and to his seed. Otherwise, the promises to them are absolute and unconditional, and run in this strain, I will, and they shall, without any ifs or conditions; as, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; I will put my law in their hearts; I will forgive their iniquities; they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest; I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me; I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit, and an heart of flesh; and I will take away the stony heart, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. and xxxii. 38, 40. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. The blessings of the covenant are not suspended on any conditions to be performed; they do not wait for any, but take place without them. Redemption by Christ, the great article of the covenant, was not deferred on account of any condition to be performed by men; but Christ, in the fulness of time agreed on in covenant, when men were without strength to do any thing, died for the ungodly; while they were yet sinners Christ died for them; and when enemies, they were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and herein appeared the love of God; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, Rom. v. 6—10. 1 John iv. 10. Adoption takes place among men, who were not the people of God; and justification has for its objects the ungodly; and God forgives the iniquities of men, and remembers them no more, though they have done nothing to deserve it, but are guilty of the greatest ingratitude and unkindness; and regeneration finds men dead in trespasses and sins, foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, without any previous dispositions or preparations in them for it, Hos. i. 10. Rom. iv. 5. Isai. xliii. 25. Eph. ii. 4, 5.

IV. The covenant of grace is perfect and complete, wanting nothing; it is *ordered in all things*; and if in all things, nothing can be wanting in it, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. It is full of precious promises; promises of all sorts, promises of things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; so that there is nothing that a believer stands in need of, nor any state nor condition he can come into, but there is a promise of what he wants, and which is suitable to him, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. xiii. 5, 6. it is full of rich blessings of grace; of all spiritual blessings, of blessings of goodness, which Christ, as Mediator, is made most blessed with; of goodness inconceivable and inexpressible, laid up in the covenant, and in the hands of Christ, for the covenant ones; it provides all things pertaining to life and godliness; for the implantation of life itself, and of every grace; for the beginning, carrying on, and finishing the work of grace on the heart; for the food, nourishment, support and maintenance of the spiritual life in it; for the peace, joy, and comfort of believers; for grace, and spiritual strength to exercise grace, perform duties, bear and suffer all that they are called unto; for their perseverance in faith and holiness to the end; and for their eternal life and happiness; grace and glory are secured in this covenant; even all salvation, the whole of it, and all the parts of it, 2 Sam. xxxiii. 5. And it is so ordered, as to secure the spiritual and eternal welfare of God's elect, so to advance the glory of God Father, Son, and Spirit; the Father is glorified in and by Christ the Mediator of it; and Christ is glorified by the Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to his people; and the Spirit is glorified by being the earnest, pledge, and seal of the heavenly inheritance, Isai. xlix. 3. John xvi. 14. Eph. i. 14.

V. It is an holy covenant; so it is called, Luke i. 72. where God, by visiting and redeeming his people, and raising up an horn of salvation for them, or by sending Christ to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them, and to be his salvation to them, which is the grand article of the covenant of grace, is said by all this to remember his holy covenant. The contracting parties in this covenant are, the holy Father, and the holy Son, and the holy Spirit, with respect to whom this epithet is thrice expressed in Isai. vi. 3. see Psal. cxi. 9. the matter of it is holy; the promises of it are holy, Psal. cv. 42. the blessings of it are holy; the what are called the mercies of David, Isai. lv. 3. are called *οσια*, the holy things of David, in Acts xiii. 34. and nothing can more strongly engage to a concern for holiness of heart and life, than the promises of the covenant; see 2 Cor. vi. 18. and vii. 1. yea, the covenant provides fully for the sanctification of all the covenant ones; expressed by writing the laws of God in the hearts of them, putting his fear into them, giving them new hearts and new spirits, taking away the stony heart from them, and putting his own Spirit within them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, keep his judgments, and do them, Jer. xxxi. 33. and xxxii. 39, 40. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

VI. It is a sure covenant, firm and immovable, more immovable than rocks and mountains; they may depart, but this covenant shall never depart, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Isai. liv. 10. it is kept or observed, as the word rendered *sure*, in the first of those places, signifies; it is kept inviolably by God that made it; hence he is sometimes described as a God *keeping covenant*, Nehem. ix. 32. his faithfulness, which he will never suffer to fail, is engaged to keep it, and therefore it is he will not break it, and men cannot, Psal. lxxxix. 33, 34. it is secured by the oath of God, and the immutability of that; for as the counsel of God is confirmed by his oath, so is the covenant of God; for it follows in the place now referred to, 35. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David.* And that is another reason why the covenant will not be broken; and why the word or promise that is gone out of his mouth, shall not be altered. The covenant is also ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ, the Testator, as has been shewn in a former chapter; whence the blood of Christ is called the blood of the covenant, which has sealed and confirmed it. The promises of the covenant, are Yea and Amen in Christ; that is, sure and firm; and the blessings of it are the sure mercies of David, and the whole of it is confirmed in Christ, 2 Cor. i. 20. Isai. liv. 3. Gal. iii. 17.

VII. It is frequently called an everlasting covenant, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Isai. liv. 3. Heb. xiii. 20. It is a covenant that will stand fast with Christ for ever, with whom it is made, and is what God has commanded for ever, and will be always fulfilling; the effects of it will be always seen and enjoyed, in time and to all eternity, Psal. lxxxix. 28. and cxi. 9. It is a covenant that will never be antiquated, nor give way to, nor be succeeded by another; the covenant of works is broken, and has been succeeded by an administration of the covenant of grace; and that first administration being not faultless, but deficient with respect to clearness and extensiveness, is waxen old, and vanished away, and has given place to a new administration of it; which will continue unto the end of the world, until all the covenant-ones are gathered in: but, though these two administrations differ in some things, as to some external circumstances and ordinances; yet the matter, sum and substance of them is the same, even Christ, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: he is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of old and new testament-saints, who all partake of the same spiritual benefits and blessings, and of the same promises; and both are saved in the same way, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; even by the grace of the covenant, which is invariable and perpetual.

OF THE COMPLACENCY AND DELIGHT GOD HAD IN HIMSELF, AND THE DIVINE PERSONS IN EACH OTHER, BEFORE ANY CREATURE WAS BROUGHT INTO BEING.

HAVING finished what I had to say concerning the internal acts of God, and the eternal transactions between the three divine Persons, before any creature, angel or man, was made; I should now have entered upon the external acts and works of God in time, but that I thought it might be proper, first, to observe the complacency, delight, and satisfaction God had in himself, in his own nature and perfections, before any creature existed; and would have had, if none had ever been brought into being: as also the pleasure he took in the foreviews of his eternal purposes and decrees being executed in time; and of the success of those transactions, which were between the divine Persons in God, in the council of peace, and covenant of grace; and especially the mutual delight and complacency each divine Person had in one another, when alone, in a boundless eternity, and all of them had in the chosen vessels of salvation.

I. The complacency, delight and satisfaction, which the divine Being had in himself, in his own nature and perfections, before the existence of any creature; and would have had the same if no creature had ever existed: in his nature, in the contemplation of the unspeakable glories of Deity, and in the special properties and mutual relations of the three persons to each other, and in the perfections of his nature. God is a most perfect being, entire and wanting nothing; he is El-shaddai, God all-sufficient, who has a sufficiency in and of himself, and needs nothing from creatures: he is the blessed one, God blessed for evermore; completely happy in himself, as has been proved, when his perfections were considered; whatever perfection or excellency is in creatures, angels or men, it is all from him, and is in him to the highest degree, and therefore as in them can add nothing to his pleasure and happiness: the perfections of God are indeed displayed in the creatures in a glorious manner; the heavens declare his glory, and the earth is full of it; but then these displays are made not for his own sake, but for the sake of others, that they may understand his eternal power and godhead, or be left without excuse; and though his perfections are very brightly displayed herein, yet they are clearer in himself, and so can give him no new pleasure and satisfaction, nor add any thing to his felicity and blessedness; for though it is said, *For thy pleasure they are and were created,* Rev. iv. 11. pleasure there does not signify delight but will; and so it should be rendered by thy will, or according to it, they are and were created; and though when they were made, and he had reviewed them, they appeared to him all very good, and he expressed his well-pleasedness in them; yet this raised no new joy in him, nor added any thing to his happiness, complete in himself; which would have been the same if a creature, or any of the works of creation had never been made, nor if any of the sons of men had ever been redeemed; for the benefit arising from the redemption of men by Christ, and the satisfaction made for them by him, redounds not to God, but to the redeemed, and for whom the satisfaction is made; *My goodness extendeth not to thee,* says Christ, *but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight,* Psal. xvi. 2, 3. nor does he need the worship and obedience of angels or men; nor does he receive any additional pleasure and happiness from them; what are the highest and loudest praises of angels, to him who is exalted above all blessing and praise? or the prayers and petitions of indigent creatures? the benefit from them is to them, and not to him; what is all the righteousness, and what are the best works done by men to him; *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him; or what receiveth he of thine hand? Can a man by all this be profitable to God?* No, he cannot; when the best of men have done all they can, they must own they are but unprofitable servants, with respect to him. *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again; for of him, and through him, and to him are all things?* Job xxii. 2, 3. and xxxv. 7, Luke xvii. 10, Rom. xi. 35, 36, Since then nothing in time, in and from creatures, add any thing to the essential glory, bliss, and happiness of the divine Being; it clearly appears, that his going forth in the works of creation, did not arise from necessity of nature, but was according to his sovereign will; and that he had infinite delight, pleasure and complacency in himself, before any creature was made, and would have had the same, if they had never been.

II. As Jehovah took delight and pleasure in himself, in his own nature, and the perfections of it, so in the internal and eternal acts of his mind; his purposes and decrees formed in his eternal mind, according to the good pleasure of his will; these concern all things done in time, from the beginning to the end of the world; the formation of the heaven, earth, and sea, and all that are in them; every thing that has been, is, or shall be, since the world began to the consummation of all things; for there is a purpose for every thing under heaven, and a time for every purpose, Eccles. iii. 1. And these all lay before God, at once and together, in his all-comprehending mind; he saw the end from the beginning, and every intervening thing; *Known unto God are all his works from eternity,* Acts xv. 18. and he delighted in them, as he saw them in himself, in his mind and will, and in the foreviews of the accomplishment of them in time; who calls things that are not, as though they were; they stood all before him in his view, as if really in execution; nor does the execution of them add any new joy and pleasure to him: particularly all those purposes and resolutions of his mind, concerning the redemption, conversion, and salvation of his chosen ones. and the state and condition of his church, in all the periods of time, were viewed within himself, with the utmost delight and pleasure; the plan of their peace and reconciliation, drawn in the council of peace, and every thing respecting their salvation, settled in the covenant of grace. These transactions gave him infinite pleasure and satisfaction; and on these his thoughts have ran ever since, with the utmost delight, in the foreviews of all things, taking place in time to eternity, according to these ancient settlements. But what I would chiefly attend unto is.

III. The delight and complacency which each divine Person had in one another, before any creature was in being; with respect to two of the divine Persons, this is strongly expressed in Prov. viii. 30. *Then I was by him, as one brought up* with him, *and I was daily* his *delight, rejoicing always before him:* when all this was, may be learned from the preceding verses; when there were no depths, no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled, while as yet he had not made the earth, &c. verse 24—29. and the third Person is not to be excluded.

1. The delight and complacency of the Father in the Son, is declared in the following expressions; which are borrowed from the delight and pleasure parents take in their children; being by them, brought up with them, nursed up by them, playing before them; which must be understood with a decency becoming the divine Persons, and not be strained beyond their general design, which is to express the mutual delight of the Father and the Son in each other: Then I was by him, from eternity, or before the world was; I, a person, as the pronoun is expressive of; not a nature, not the human nature of Christ, which is no person; and still less a part of it, the soul of Christ, which then had no existence; but I, a divine Person, the eternal Logos, the Word and Wisdom of God, who is all along speaking from verse 12. I Wisdom, &c. to this very passage, the same with the Word John speaks of, and much in the same language, chap. i. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the*

Word was God; to which Word he ascribes the creation of all things, and therefore must be before them, as well as be a divine Person; and he is in both places represented as a distinct Person, as he must be, from him, by whom, and with whom, he was a Person eternally existing; being not only before Abraham, but before Adam, or any creature was in being; a Person co-existing, as a Son with the Father, being co-essential and co-eternal with his Father; and was by him, and at his side, on a level with him; Jehovah's fellow, equal to him, possessed of the same perfections; and being by him, and in his presence, was infinitely delighted in by him; and was as one brought up with him, as a Son with a Father, and so denotes his relation to him, being begotten of him, his own Son, the Son of the Father, in truth and love; and the Father's tender regard of him, and delight in him; being, as some render the word, nursed up by him, and carried in his bosom, as a nursing Father bears the sucking child; so to express the exceeding great tenderness of the Father to the Son, and his delight in him, the only begotten Son, he is said to be *in the bosom of the Father*, John i. 18. Though the phrase may also have respect to Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, who was foreordained and constituted as Mediator by his Father, and trained up in his office, and to whom he pointed out the work, he was to do as such; to bring Jacob again, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel; and be his salvation unto the ends of the earth, Isai. xlix. 5, 6. *And I was daily his delight*; day by day, or every day; not that there are, properly speaking, days in eternity; but the phrase is expressive of the constant and invariable delight the Father had in his Son; as well as the greatness of it is signified by the word in the plural number, delights; he was his exceeding great delight, superlatively delightful to him; and so he was, as he was his Son, a Son of delights, the dear Son of his love; whom he loved before the foundation of the world, with a love of complacency and delight; he was always his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; partly because of his likeness to him, being the image of the invisible God, the express image of his Person; as every like loves its like; and partly because of the same nature with him, having the same perfections, even the whole fulness of the Godhead in him: he was also his delight, considered in his office as Mediator; *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth*, Isai. xlii. 1. He delighted in him, as engaging in covenant to be the Mediator and Surety of it; as with admiration, so with the utmost pleasure and delight, he said, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?* Jer. xxx. 21. to strike hands with me, and become a Surety for my people. And with equal pleasure, did he behold him acceding and assenting to his proposals in covenant, saying *Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!* Psal. xl. 7, 8. He delighted in him as the God-man; being fit, as such, for the work he assigned unto him; and whereas he proposed to him in covenant, to assume human nature in time, for that purpose, and he agreed unto it, he viewed him henceforward as the God-man; and he bore the repute of it with him, and considered him under this character; he delighted in the foreviews of his future assumption of human nature; and a little before the time, by Zechariah, one of the last of the prophets, expressed his joy at the near approach of it; *Behold, I will bring forth my Servant, the Branch*; that is, speedily, in a very short time; and again, *Behold, the Man, whose name is the Branch, he shall grow up out of his place*, Zech. iii. 8. and vi. 12. which is signified to be future, yet near. And he delighted in the foreviews of that obedience to his will his Son should yield in that nature, by which the law would be magnified and made honourable; and of his sufferings and death in it, whereby full satisfaction would be given for the sins of his people; and of his glorification at his right hand in that nature he had promised him; and of his own glory displayed in the salvation of men by him, and a full accomplishment of that; an affair his heart was so much set upon from everlasting. In the foreviews of all this was Christ as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, as well as God's own Son, the object of his infinite delight and pleasure from everlasting.

II. The Son of God also had the same delight and pleasure in his divine Father, before the world was; and when there was no creature in being, he was then rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in being possessed of the same nature and perfections his Father was, being like and equal to him in all things and rejoicing that he stood in such a relation to him as a Son to a Father; with what exultation does he repeat the words of his Father to him, declaring this relation; *The Lord hath said unto me*, and that was in eternity, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, Psal. ii. 7. He delighted in the foreviews of his future incarnation, as being agreeable to his Father's will; *A body hast thou prepared me*, Heb. x. 5. which he spoke with pleasure, and as being willing and desirous to assume it; in which he should do his Father's will and work, and which would be his meat and drink, and accomplish the salvation of his people, which was the *joy set before him*; and he rejoiced in the foreviews of his Father being glorified by it, and of his own glory upon it, John xiii. 31, 32. and xvii. 1—5.

III. Though the third Person, the holy Spirit, is not mentioned in the passage in Proverbs; yet as the Father delights in the Son, and the Son in the Father, so both of them delight in the Spirit, as proceeding from them, and he in them; for these Three are One, of the same nature and perfections, and have a mutual in-being in each other, and so a complacency in one another; for as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, John x. 38. and xiv. 10. so the Spirit is in them, and they in him; and in consequence must have a mutual delight in each other: the Spirit, as he is of the same nature with the Father and the Son, always took infinite delight in his own nature and perfections; and as he was privy to all the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of God, which are the deep things he searches and reveals; he must have taken pleasure in them, and in the foreviews of the execution of them; and as he approved and assented to all the articles in the council and covenant of peace, he must have had infinite delight in the view of the accomplishment of them, as well as of those things which he himself in covenant undertook to perform.

IV. This mutual delight and complacency which each Person had in one another, lay in and arose from the perfect knowledge they had of each other; *As the Father knoweth me*, says Christ, *so know I the Father*, John x. 15. and the Spirit knows them both, and the things that are in them, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. and hence arises mutual love to each other; the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, John iii. 35. and v. 20. and xiv. 31. and the Spirit proceeding from them both, loves them both; and it cannot be otherwise, since there is such a nearness to, and mutual in-being in each other. Moreover,

IV. The three divine Persons had from eternity, and before any creature was in actual being, the utmost delight and complacency in the elect of God, and in the foreviews of their salvation and happiness. The joy and delight of the Son in them are strongly expressed in Prov. viii. 31. *Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men*; that is, from everlasting; before ever the earth was made, or any creature in it; then was the Son of God *rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth*; in the foreviews of those spots of ground, houses and cottages, where it was known the chosen vessels of mercy would dwell: for God has *determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*; and Christ knew beforehand in what places he should have a people, and in which this and that man should be born again, Acts xvii. 26. and xviii. 10. Psal. lxxxvii. 4—6. and as lovers express their love to the objects of their love, by saying they love the ground on which they tread; so Christ having loved his people with a love of complacency and delight, rejoiced in the foresight of those parts of the habitable world, where he saw their habitations would be: the church of God on earth, may be called the habitable part of his earth, being the dwelling-place which he has chosen for himself as such, and where he delights to dwell, and they were from everlasting his Hephzibah and Beulah. Some respect may be had to the new earth, or the second Adam's earth; in which only righteous persons will dwell; and where the tabernacle of God will be with men, his chosen ones; and where he will dwell with them a thousand years; and in this also the Son of God was rejoicing in the foreviews of: nor am I averse to take in the human nature of Christ, into the sense of the words; who, though with respect to his divine Person, and mediatorial office, is the Lord from heaven; yet, as to his human nature, he was curiously wrought, by the power and skill of the Holy Ghost, *in the lowest parts of the earth*, in the womb of the virgin, and therefore called *the fruit of the earth*, being born of an earthly woman, Psal. cxxxix. 15. Isai. iv. 2. and which human nature is a tabernacle God pitched, and not men; a tabernacle for the eternal word to dwell in, and where the fulness of the

Godhead dwells bodily; and in the views of this the Son of God was rejoicing before the world was; and in time expressed his desire of it, and delight in it, before it became his habitation; as may be concluded from his frequent appearances in an human form, before his incarnation, as preludiums of it: as to Adam, Abraham, Jacob, and other patriarchs; he rejoiced in the foreviews of it, as it would be of the same kind with that of the children given him, and he had undertook to redeem and save; and as it would be the produce of the holy Spirit, and so free from sin; and as it would be filled and adorned with his gifts and graces; and as after he had done the will of God in it, it would be crowned with glory and honour, and set down at the right hand of God: and all this joy and delight were with a peculiar respect unto the elect of God, as follows; And my delights were with the sons of men, the posterity of Adam, fallen creatures, the chosen of God among them, who sinned in him, and on whom judgment came unto condemnation, and who are conceived and born in sin, and by nature children of wrath as others; and yet the delights of Christ, his exceeding great delight, expressed by the plural number, were with them as they were loved by his Father, chosen in him, and given to him; and as he viewed them redeemed by him, washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness and as he saw them in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees, in all the glory he designed to bring them to, even to be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Now not only the Son of God took delight and complacency in the elect of God, before the world was; but the Father and Spirit also; for God the Father of Christ loved them, and chose them in him, before the foundation of the world, 2 Thess. ii. 13. Eph. i. 4. And this love was a love of complacency and delight; because he delighted in them, therefore he chose them to be his peculiar people, as he did Israel of old, in a national sense, Deut. x. 15. And from the same delight in them arose the council held by him with the other two Persons concerning them; and the covenant of grace he entered into with them. And so the holy Spirit, his delights were with the same Persons, as they were chosen in Christ, through sanctification by him; and in the foreviews of their being temples for him to dwell in; and in whom he should abide as the earnest and pledge of their future glory; and as the sealer of them to the day of redemption; and as they should be sanctified and made meet by him for eternal glory and happiness.

Thus we see what delight and complacency, satisfaction and happiness, God had in himself before any creature existed; and would have continued the same, if none had ever been created: so that he needed not for his own sake, to go forth in acts of power, to bring creatures into being, since he would have been as happy without them as with them; wherefore the production of them into being is purely the effect of his sovereign will and pleasure; and we see what the thoughts of God were employed about, and chiefly concerned in, in eternity; and the whole furnishes an answer to those curious questions, if it is proper to make them; What was God doing in eternity? what did his thoughts chiefly run upon then? and wherein lay his satisfaction, delight, and happiness?

BOOK III.

OF THE EXTERNAL WORKS OF GOD.

OF CREATION IN GENERAL.

HAVING considered the internal and eternal acts of the divine mind, and the transactions of the divine Persons with each other in eternity; I proceed to consider the external acts and works of God, or his goings forth out of himself, in the exercise of his power and goodness in the works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace; which works of God, without himself, in time, are agreeable to the acts of his mind within himself, in eternity. These are no other than his eternal purposes and decrees carried into execution; for *he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*, Eph. i. 11. I shall begin with the work of creation, which is what God himself began with; and shall consider the following things concerning it.

I. What creation is. Sometimes it only signifies the natural production of creatures into being, in the ordinary way, by generation and propogation; so the birth of persons, or the bringing them into being, in the common course of nature, is called the creation of them, and God is represented as their Creator, Ezek. xxi. 30. and xxviii. 14. Eccles. xii. 1. Sometimes it designs acts of providence, in bringing about affairs of moment and importance in the world; as when it is said, *I form the light, and create darkness*; which is explained by what follows, *I make peace, and create evil:* It is to be understood of prosperous and adverse dispensations of providence; which are the Lord's doings, and are according to his sovereign will and pleasure, Isai. lv. 7. So the renewing of the face of the earth, and re-production of herbs, plants, &c. in the returning spring of the year, is called a creation of them, Psal. civ. 30. And the renewing of the world, in the end of time, though the substance of it will remain, is called a creating new heavens and a new earth, Isai. lxv. 17. Sometimes it intends the doing something unusual, extraordinary and wonderful; such as the earth's opening its mouth, and swallowing up the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness, Numb. xvi. 30. and the wonderful protection of the church of God, Isai. iv. 5. and particularly the amazing incarnation of the Son of God, Jer. xxxi. 22. But, to observe no more, creation may be distinguished into mediate and immediate; mediate creation is the production of beings, by the power of God, out of pre-existent matter, which of itself was not disposed to produce them; so God is said to create great whales and other fishes, which, at his command, the waters brought forth abundantly; and he created man, male and female; and yet man, as to his body, was made of the dust of the earth, and the woman out of the rib of man, Gen. i. 21, 27. and, indeed, all that was created on the five last days of the creation, was made by the all-commanding power and will of God, out of matter which before existed, though indisposed of itself for such a production. Immediate creation, and which is properly creation, is the production of things out of nothing, or the bringing of a non-entity into being, as was the work of the first day, the creating the heavens and the earth, the unformed chaos, and the light commanded to arise upon it, Gen. i. 1—3. And these are the original of all things; so that all things ultimately are made out of nothing, which is the voice of divine revelation, and our faith is directed to assent unto and receive; *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear*, Heb. xi. 3. but of things unseen, and, indeed, which had no existence; for God, by his all-commanding word and power, *called things that are not, as though they were*, Rom iv. 17. that is, called and commanded by his mighty power, non-entities into being; and this is what is meant by a creation of things out of nothing; and so the word ברא, used for the making of the heavens and the earth in the beginning, signifies, as *Aben, Ezra*, and *Kimchi* observe; and indeed, it cannot be conceived of otherwise, but that the world was made out of nothing: for,

If nothing existed from eternity but God, or if nothing existed before the world was but himself, by which his eternity is described, and which he claims as peculiar to himself, Psal. xc. 2. Isai. xliii. 10. and if the world was made by him, as it most certainly was, it must be made by him out of nothing, since besides himself, there was nothing existing, out of which it could be made; to say it was made out of pre-existent matter, is to beg the question; besides, that pre-existent matter must be made by him; for he has *created all things*, Rev. iv. 11. and if all things, nothing can be excepted; and certainly not matter; for be that visible or invisible, one of them it must be; and both the one and the other are created of God, Col. i. 16. and this matter must be made out of nothing, so that it comes to the same thing, that all things are originally made out of nothing. Besides, there are some creatures, and those the most noble, as angels and the souls of men, which are immaterial, and therefore are not made out of matter, and consequently are made out of nothing; and are brought from non-entity into being, by the almighty power of God; and if these, why not others? and if these and others, why not all things, even matter itself? As for that old and trite maxim, so much in the mouths of the ancient philosophers, as well as modern reasoners, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, out of nothing, nothing is made; this only holds true of finite nature, finite beings, second causes; by them out of nothing, nothing can be made; but not of infinite nature, of the infinite Being, the first Cause, who is a God of infinite perfection and power; and what is it that omnipotence cannot do? Plato[w] owns, that God is the Cause, or Author of those things, which before were not in being, or created all things out of nothing.

II. The object of creation, all things, nothing excepted in the whole compass of finite nature; *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure, or by thy will, they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. these all things are comprehended by Moses under the name of the heavens and the earth, Gen. i. 1. and more fully expressed by the apostles in their address to God, who is described by them as having *made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is*, Acts iv. 24. and still more explicitly by the Angel, who swore by the living God *who created heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the sea, and the things which are therein*, Rev. x. 6.

1. The heavens and all in them; these are often represented as made and created by God, and are said to be the work of his fingers and of his hands; being curiously as well as powerfully wrought by him, Psal. viii. 3. and xix. 1. and cii. 25. They are spoken of in the plural number, for there are more heavens than one; there are certainly three, for we read of a third heaven, which is explained of paradise, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4. this is,—1. The heaven of heavens, the superior heaven, and the most excellent, the habitation of God, where his glorious presence is, where he has his palace, keeps his court, and is indeed his throne, Isai. lxv. 15. and lxvi. 1. and where angels dwell, and therefore they are called the angels of heaven, are in the presence of God there, and behold the face of our heavenly Father, Matt. xxiv. 36. and xviii. 10. and where glorified saints will be in soul and body to all eternity. Now this is a place made and created by God, and as such cannot contain him, though his glory is greatly manifested in it, 1 Kings viii. 27. it is where the angels are, who must have an *ubi*, somewhere to be in, being finite creatures, and who are said to ascend unto, and descend from thence, John i. 51. and here bodies are, which require space and place, as those of Enoch and Elijah, translated thither, and the human nature of Christ, which has ascended to it, and will be retained in it, until his second coming; and where the bodies of those are, who rose at the time of his resurrection; as well as all the bodies of the saints will be to all eternity: and this is expressly called a place by Christ, and is distinguished as the place of the blessed, from that of the damned, John xiv. 2, 3. Luke xvi. 26. and is sometimes described by an house, a city, a country, kingdom, and an inheritance; and particularly it is called a *city whose builder and maker is God*, Heb. xi. 10. for he that built all things built this; it is a part of his creation; and all things in it are created by him; he the uncreated Being excepted; even God, Father, Son, and Spirit; but the angels of it are his creatures; *He makes his angels spirits*, Psal. civ. 5. of their creation, and the time of it, of their nature,

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[w] Sophista, p. 185.

number, excellency, and usefulness, I shall treat in a particular chapter. — 2. There is another heaven, lower than the former, and may be called the second, and bears the name of the starry heaven, because the sun, and moon, and stars are placed in it: *Look towards heaven, and tell the stars*, Gen. xv. 5. see Isai. xl. 26. Job xxii. 12. this reaches from the region of the moon, to the place of the fixed stars, and to that immense space which our eyes cannot reach. Now this, and all that in it are, were created by God; he made the sun to rule by day, and the moon to rule by night: and he made the stars also, Gen. i. 16. — 3. There is another heaven lower than both the former, and may be called the aerial heaven; for the air and heaven are sometimes synonymous; hence the fowls are sometimes called the fowls of the heaven, and sometimes the fowls of the air, they being the same, Gen. vii. 3, 23. Now this wide expanse, or firmament of heaven, is the handy-work of God, and all things in it; not only the fowls that fly in it, but all the meteors gendered there; as rain, snow, thunder and lightening. *Hath the rain a father?* None but God; and the same may be said of all the rest, Job xxxvii. 6. and xxxviii. 28, 29.

II. The earth and all that is therein. This was first made without form; not without any, but without the beautiful one in which it quickly appeared; and when the waters were drained off from it, and became dry land, it was called earth, Gen. i. 2, 9, 10. and as this was made by God, so all things in it; the grass, the herbs, the plants, and trees upon it; the metals and minerals in the bowels of it, gold, silver, brass, and iron; all the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills;" as well as the principal inhabitants of it, men, called eminently the inhabitants of the earth, Dan. iv. 35. Of the creation of man I shall treat in a distinct chapter by itself.

III. The sea, and all that is in that; when God cleaved an hollow in the earth, the waters he drained off of it, he gathered into it; and gave those waters, thus gathered into one place, the name of seas, Gen. i. 10. and which were of his creating; *The sea is his, and he made it*, Psal. xcv. 5. and all in it: likewise the marine plants and trees, with other things therein; and all the fishes which swim in it, great and small, innumerable, Psal. civ. 25, 26. Now these, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that are in them, make up the world which God has created, and which is but one; for though we read of worlds, God has made by his Son, and which are framed by the word of God, Heb. i. 2. and xi. 3. yet these may have respect only to the distinction of the upper, middle, and lower world; for the numerous worlds some Jewish writers speak of, they are mere fables; and that the planets are so many worlds as our earth is, and that the fixed stars are so many suns to worlds unknown by us, are the conjectures of modern astronomers, and in which there is no certainty; revelation gives no account of them, and we have no concern with them; and were there as many as are imagined, and can be conceived of, this we may be assured of, they were all created by God.

III. The next thing to be enquired into is, When creation began? or God began to create and bring things into being? and this was not in eternity, but in time; an eternal creature, or a creature in eternity, is the greatest absurdity imaginable; to assert it is an insult on the common sense and understanding of men: It was in the beginning of time, or when time first began, as it did, when a creature was first made, that God made all things; *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*, Gen. i. 1. *And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, &c.* Heb. i. 10. these were the first that were created, and with these time begun; and every creature has a beginning, creation supposes it; for that is no other than bringing a non-entity into being; and therefore since what is created, once was not, it must have a beginning. Some Philosophers, and Aristotle at the head of them, have asserted the eternity of the world; but without any reason; and is abundantly refuted by scripture; and therefore cannot be received by those that believe its divine authority; for that not only assures us that it was created in the beginning, and so had a beginning; but gives us an account of what was before it; as, that before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and world were formed, God was, even from everlasting; so that an eternity anteceded the making of the world. Christ also, the Wisdom and Word of God, was before the earth was; even when there were no depths, nor fountains abounding with water; before the mountains and hills were settled, and the highest part of the world made, Psal. xc. 2. Prov. viii. 24—30. A choice of men was made in Christ unto eternal life, before the foundation of the world; and grace was given to them in him, as their head and representative, before the world began, Eph. i. 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. A full proof that the world had a beginning; and that there were things done in eternity, before the world was in being. To say the world, or matter, was co-eternal with God, is to make that itself God; for eternity is a perfection peculiar to God; and where one perfection is, all are: what is eternal, is infinite and unbounded; and if the world is eternal, it is infinite; and then there must be two infinites, which is an absurdity not to be received. Besides, if eternal, it must necessarily exist; or exist by necessity of nature; and so be self-existent, and consequently God; yea, must be independent of him, and to which he can have no claim, nor any power and authority over it; whereas, according to divine revelation, and even the reason of things, all things were according to the pleasure of God, or by his will, Rev. iv. 11. and therefore must be later than his will, being the effect of it.

And as the world had a beginning, and all things in it, it does not appear to be of any great antiquity; it has not, as yet run out six thousand years, according to the scriptural account, and which may be depended on. Indeed, according to the Greek version, the age of the world is carried fourteen or fifteen hundred years higher; but the Hebrew text is the surest rule to go by: as for the accounts of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Chinese, which make the original of their kingdoms and states, many thousand of years higher still: these are only vain boasts, and fabulous relations, which have no foundation in true history. The origin of nations, according to the scriptures, which appears to be the truest; and the invention of arts and sciences, and of various things necessary to human life; as of agriculture, the bringing up of cattle; making of various utensils of brass and iron, for the various businesses of life; and the finding out of letters; with many other things, which appear to be within the time the scripture assigns for the creation; plainly shew it could not be earlier, since without these men could not be long: nor does any genuine history give an account of any thing more early, nor so early as the scriptures do; and therefore we may safely conclude, that the origin of the world, as given by that, is true; for if the world had been eternal, or of so early a date as some kingdoms pretend unto, something or other done in those ancient times, would have been, some way or another, transmitted to posterity.

Under this head might be considered, the time and season of the year when the world was created. Some think it was the vernal equinox, or spring of the year, when plants and trees are blooming, look beautiful, and all nature is gay and pleasant; and at which season in every year, there is a renewing of the face of the earth: and some have observed, in favour of this notion, that the redemption of man was wrought out at this time of the year, which is a restoration of the world; but these seem not sufficient to ascertain it. Others think the world was created in the autumnal equinox, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and in their full perfection; which seems more probable: and certain it is, that some nations of old, as the Egyptians and others, began their year at this time; as did the Israelites, before their coming out of Egypt, when they were ordered by the Lord to make a change; and from thenceforward to reckon the month Abib, or Nisan, in which they came out of Egypt, the first month of the year, and which answers to part of March and part of April; and which they always observed for the regulation of their ecclesiatic affairs, though with respect to civil matters, they still continued to reckon the year from Tisri, which answers to some part of our September; and it may be observed, that the feast of ingathering the fruits of the earth, is said to be *in the end of the year*; and when a new year begun; see Exod. xii. 2. and xxiii. 16. But this is a matter of no great moment, which way soever it is determined; what follows is of more importance.

IV. The author of creation is God, and he only; hence he is called the creator of the ends of the earth, of the whole world, to the utmost bounds of it; and claims the making the heavens and the earth to himself alone; and a curse is pronounced on those deities that made not the heavens and the earth; and it is declared, that they should perish from the earth, and from under those heavens, Isai. xl. 28. and xlii. 5. and xliv. 24. Jer. x. 11. and more divine persons than one were concerned in this work, for we read of creators and makers in the plural number, Eccl. xii. 1. Job xxxv. 10. Psal. cxlix. 2. Isai. liv. 5. and a plural word for God is made use of at the first mention of the creation, Gen. i. 1. and these divine persons are Father, Son and Spirit, the one only living and true God; of the Father of Christ there can be no doubt; our Lord addresses his Father as Lord of heaven and earth, the possessor and governor of both, being the creator of them, Matt. xi. 25. and the apostles expressly ascribe to him the making of the heavens, earth and sea, and all that is in them, Acts iv. 24, 27. and he is said to make the worlds by his Son, and to create all things by Jesus Christ, Heb. i. 2. Eph. iii. 9. not by him as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause; for the particle *by* does not always signify an instrument; see Rom. xi. 26. besides, it is expressly said of the Word and Son of God, who is God, that *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that is made*; and of him, the image of the invisible God and first-born, or first parent and producer of every creature, that *all things were created by him, and for him*; by him as the first cause, and for him as the chief end, John i. 1—3. Col. i. 15, 16. and the Son is addressed by his divine Father after this manner, *And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands*; and by him, the eternal Logos, the essential Word of God[x], the worlds are said to be framed, Heb. i. 8—10. and xi. 3. nor is the holy Spirit to be excluded from having a concern in the works of creation; since he not only moved upon the face of the waters at the first creation, and brought the unformed earth into a beautiful order, and by him the heavens were garnished, and bespangled with luminaries, Gen. i. 2. Job xxvi. 13. but the formation of men is ascribed to him, *The Spirit of God hath made me*, saith *Elihu*, *and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, Job xxxiii. 4. and since the Spirit of God is the author of regeneration, which is a re-creation, or a new creation, and which requires the same almighty power to effect it, as the old creation did; and since he is the giver of all grace, and of every spiritual gift, which he dispenses to every one severally as he will; no doubt ought to be made of it, that he had an hand in the creation of all things.

And this work of creation was wrought by God, Father, Son and Spirit, without any other cause, principal or instrumental; not principal, for then that would be equal with God; nor instrumental, since creation is a production of things out of nothing, there was nothing for an instrument to operate upon; and since it was an instantaneous action, done in a moment, there could be no opportunity of using and employing one: besides, this instrument must be either God or a creature; not God, because it is supposed to be distinct from him, and to be made use of by him; and if a creature, it must be used in the creation of itself, which is an absurdity; for then it must be and not be at the same moment: nor could nor can creative power be communicated to a creature; this would be to make finite infinite, and so another God, which cannot be; this would be to make God to act contrary to his nature, to deny himself, which he cannot do; and to destroy all distinction between the creature and the creator, and to introduce and justify the idolatry of the heathens, who worshipped the creature besides the creator.

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[x] Pretty remarkable is the account given by Laertius in vita Zeno, of the notion of the Stoics concerning creation, "with them, he says, there are two principles of all things, an agent and a patient; the patient is substance, matter without quality; the agent on it is τον εν αυτη λογον τον Θεον, God the Word; for he being eternal effects or creates every thing by or through the whole of it."

V. The manner and order of the creation; it was done at once by the mighty power of God, by his all commanding will and word, *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast*, Psal. xxxiii. 9. he gave the word, and every creature started into being in a moment; for though God took six days for the creation of the world and all things in it, to make his works the more observable, and that they might be distinctly considered, and gradually become the object of contemplation and wonder; yet the work of every day, and every particular work in each day, were done in a moment, without any motion and change, without any labour and fatigue, only by a word speaking, by an almighty fiat, let it be done, and it immediately was done; thus on the first day, by the word of the Lord the heavens and the earth were at once made, and light was called into being, Let there be light, and there was light. On the second day the firmament of heaven, the great expanse, was formed in the same manner, to divide the waters above it, gathered up and formed into clouds, from those that were under it upon the surface of the earth; and on the third day, in one moment of that day, God ordered the waters under the heavens to be gathered into one place called the sea, and leave the land dry, which he called earth; and in another moment of that day he commanded the earth to bring forth grass, herbs and trees, and they sprung up at once. On the fourth day he made the sun, moon and stars in an instant, and directed their several uses; on the fifth day, in one moment of it, he bid the water bring forth fowls, and in another moment of it created great whales, and the numerous fishes of the sea; and on the sixth day, in one moment of it, he ordered the earth to bring forth living creatures, beasts and cattle wild and tame; and in another moment on the same day he created man after his image, his soul immaterial out of nothing, his body out of the dust of the earth; and in another moment on the same day created the woman out of the rib of man, immediately infusing into her a rational soul as into man, since both were made after the image of God; and thus God proceeded in the creation of things in the visible world, from things less perfect to those more perfect, and from inanimate creatures to animate ones, and from irrational creatures to rational ones; and in his great wisdom provided food and habitations for living creatures before he made them; and when he had finished his works he overlooked them and pronounced them all very good. Nor is it any objection to the goodness of them that some creatures are noxious and hurtful to men, since they become so through the sin of men; and others are of a poisonous nature, since even these may be good and useful to others; and God has given man capacity and sagacity to distinguish between what may be hurtful to him, and what is salutary. There remains nothing more to be observed but,

VI. The end of the creation of all things: and, — 1. The ultimate end is the glory of God: *The Lord hath made*, in every sense *all things for himself*; that is, for his glory, Prov. xvi. 4. and his glory is displayed in all, the heavens declare it, and the earth is full of it, even the glory of all the divine perfections; *for the invisible things of him*, his nature, perfections and atttributes, *from the creation of the world*, or by the works of creation, *are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made*, which could never be made without them, *even his eternal power and godhead*; all the perfections of deity, particularly his infinite and almighty power, Rom. i. 20. for as the prophet Jeremy says, *Lord God, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm*, Jer. xxxii. 17. moreover the goodness of God is remarkably displayed in the creation; God appears therein to be communicative of his goodness, since he has not only made all things very good, but all conducive to the good of his creatures; the whole earth is full of his goodness; and men are called upon by the Psalmist to give thanks to God because he is good; and the principal things instanced in, in which his goodness appears, are the works of creation; see Psal. xxxiii. 5. and cxxxvi. 1, 4, &c. to all which may be added, the rich display that is made of the wisdom of God in the several parts of the creation; *The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens, by his knowledge the depths are broken up*, Prov. iii. 19, 20. The wisdom of God appears in every creature he has made, in their form, shape, texture and nature, suitable for what they are designed, and in their subserviency to each other, so that the Psalmist well might say, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!* Psal. civ. 24. — 2. The subordinate end is the good of man, of men in general; the earth is made to be inhabited by man, and all the creatures on it are put in subjection to him, and are for his use and service, as well as all that grows upon it, or are in the bowels of it, Isai. xlv. 12, 18. Psal. viii. 6—8. the celestial bodies, the sun, moon and stars, and all the influences of the heavens, are for his benefit, Gen. i. 14—18. Hos. ii. 21, 22. particularly the world and all things were made for the sake of God's chosen people, who in the several ages of time were to be brought forth and appear on it; and in which, as on a stage and theatre, the great work of their redemption and salvation was to be performed in the most public manner; and they have the best title to the world, even the present world, Christ being theirs, whose is the world and the fulness of it, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Psal. xxiv. 1. as well as the new heavens and the new earth, as they will be when refined and purified, the second Adam's world, are for their sakes; and in which none but righteous persons will dwell, even the whole church of God, when prepared as a bride for her husband, and where the tabernacle of God will be with men, 2 Pet. iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 1—4. yea the angels of heaven are created for their use and service; they are all *ministering spirits, sent forth to* *minister for them who are heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. wherefore upon the whole it becomes us to glorify and worship God our creator, to fear him and stand in awe of him, and to put our trust and confidence in him, both for things temporal and spiritual.

OF THE CREATION OF ANGELS.

FROM considering the creation in general, I descend to particulars; not to all the creatures that are made; to treat of the nature, form, figure, and qualities of every creature in heaven, earth, and sea, would be a work too large and tedious, and what belongs to naturalists and philosophers, and not divines: I shall only consider angels, the chief of God's words in the heavens; and man, the principal of his creatures on earth. And begin with the angels.

Though the creation of angels is not expressly mentioned in the account of the creation by Moses, yet it is implied in it; for the heavens include all that are in them; which are said to be created by God; and among these must be the angels: besides, Moses, in closing the account of the creation, observes, *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them*, Gen. ii. 1. Now of the hosts of heaven, the angels are the principal part: they are expressly called, the heavenly host, and the armies of heaven, Dan. ix. 35. Luke ii. 13. and therefore must have been created within the six days of the creation: though on what particular day is not certain, whether on the first, second, third, or fourth; all have been pitched upon by one or another; most probably the first, on which day the heavens were created; and that first, and then the earth; so that the angels might be created with the heavens, whose nature is most similar to the heavens, and the heavens the habitation of them; and accordingly might be present at the forming and founding of the earth, on the same day, and sing on that occasion, Job xxxviii. 7. which is the sense of that text, the time of their creation is plainly pointed out by it; for though they were created very early, some time within the creation of the six days, since some of them fell before man did; and one of the apostate angels was concerned in the seduction of our first parents, and was the instrument of their fall and ruin, quickly after their creation; yet they were not created before the world was, as some have fancied, and which is a mere fancy; for there was nothing before the world was, but the supreme Being, the Creator of all things; *Before the world was*, is a phrase expressive of eternity, and that is peculiar to God, and whose eternity is expressed by the same phrase; *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God*, Psal. xc. 2. Besides, though angels have not bodies, and so are not in place circumscriptively; yet, as they are creatures, they must have an *ubi*, a somewhere, in which they are definitively; so that they are here, and not there, and much less every where: now where was there an *ubi*, a somewhere, for them to exist in, before the heavens and the earth were made? it is most reasonable therefore to conclude, that as God prepared an habitation for all the living creatures before he made them; as the sea for the fishes; the expanse, or air, for the fowls; and the earth for men and beasts; so he made the heavens first, and then the angels to dwell in them: and these were made all at once and together; not like their kindred, the souls or spirits of men, which are made one by one, as their bodies are; for they are created, not without them, but in them, by God, *who formeth the spirit of man within him*, Zech. xii. 1. But the angelic spirits were made altogether; for all those morning-stars, the sons of God, were present, and shouted at the foundation of the earth; and all the host of heaven, which must be understood chiefly of angels, were made by the breath of God, when the heavens were created by his word, Job xxxviii. 7. Psal. xxxiii. 6. and their numbers are many; there was a multitude of them at the birth of Christ, Luke ii. 13. and our Lord speaks of twelve legions of them and more, that he could have had at asking them of his Father, Matt. xxvi. 53. According to the vision in Dan. vii. 10. thousand thousands of these ministering spirits, ministered to the Ancient of days, and which number is greatly exceeded in the vision John saw, Rev. v. 11. where those in worship with the living creatures and elders are said to be ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, and may well be called an innumerable company, Heb. xii. 22. and yet the passages referred to only speak of good angels; the evil angels are many also; we read of a legion of them in one man, Mark v. 9. perhaps those that fell, may be as many as those that stood; and if so, how great must be the number of them all together, at their creation? Now these are all the creatures of God; *who maketh his angels spirits*, Psal. civ. v. they are made by Jehovah the Father, who is called from hence, as well as from his making the souls of men, *the Father of Spirits*, Heb. xii. 9. and by Jehovah the Son, *for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible*; and among the latter, angels must be reckoned; and who are farther described by *thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers*; these *all were created by him and for him*, Col. i. 16. Nor is Jehovah the Spirit to be excluded from a concern in the creation of them, since, as *by the word of the Lord were the heavens made*, so *all the host of them*, the angels, *by the breath*, or Spirit, *of his mouth*, Psal. xxxiii. 6. Concerning these excellent creatures of God, the following things may be observed.

I. Their names: as for proper names, though there are many of them in the Apocryphal, and Jewish writings, yet in the sacred scriptures but few, perhaps no more than one, and that is Gabriel, the name of an angel sent with dispatches to Daniel, Zacharias, and to the virgin Mary, Dan. viii. 16. and ix. 21. Luke i. 19, 26, for as for Michael, the Archangel, he seems to be no other than Christ, the Prince of angels, and Head of all principality and power; who is as God, like unto him, as his name signifies; yea, equal with him. The names, titles, and epithets of angels, are chiefly taken from their nature, qualities, appearances, and offices; some that are ascribed to them, do not seem to belong to them, as cherubim and seraphim, which are names and characters of ministers of the word, and the Watchers, in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, thought to be angels by many, more probably are the divine Persons in the Godhead, the same with the holy Ones, and the most High, Dan. iv. 17, 24. The name of Elohim is their principal one, translated gods, Psal. xcvii. 7. and interpreted of angels, Heb. i. 6. the same word is translated angels, Psal. viii. 5. and which is justified by the apostle, Heb. ii. 9. Now angels have this name because they have been sent with messages from God, in his name, to men; and they have spoken in his name, and been his representatives; and may be called so, as magistrates sometimes are, because God's vicegerents, and acts under him, and for a like reason have the names of *thrones*, *dominions*, *principalities* and *powers*, Col. i. 16. Not because of any hierarchy, or order of government, established among themselves, which does not appear; but rather because of the dignity they are advanced unto, being princes in the court of heaven; and because of that power and authority which, under God, and by his direction, they exercise over kingdoms, provinces, and particular persons on earth: and if the text in Job xxxviii. 7. is to be understood of angels, it furnishes us with other names and titles of them; as morning-stars, and sons of God; and they may be called morning-stars, because of the brightness, splendour, and glory of their nature; and because of the clearness of their light, knowledge, and understanding; in which sense they are angels of light; and into one of which Satan sometimes transforms himself, who was once a bright morning-star: and these may be said to be sons of God; not by grace and adoption, as saints are; much less by divine generation, as Christ is; *For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?* Heb. i. 5. but by creation, being made in the image of God, which consists in wisdom and knowledge, in righteousness and holiness; and being his favourites, and beloved of him. They sometimes have the name of men given them; because they have appeared in an human form; such were two of those who appeared like men to Abraham, and afterwards to Lot; and two others seen by the women at Christ's sepulchre, Gen. xviii. 2. and xix. i, 5, 8. Luke xxiv. 4. The more common name given to the celestial spirits, is that of angels; the word for which in the Hebrew language, and which is used of them in the Old Testament, signifies messengers; and so the uncreated Angel, Christ, is called the Angel, or Messenger of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1. and it comes from a root preserved in the Ethiopic dialect, which signifies to send[z], because these spirits have been often sent with messages and dispatches to the children of men: the word angels we use, comes from a Greek word[a], which signifies the same; and are so called, from their being sent on, and bringing messages, which they declare, publish and proclaim.

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[z] [illegible] legavit, misit nuncium, Ludolf. Lexic. Ethiop. p. 19.

[a] ἀγγέλλω, nuntio, nuntium affero, Scapula.

II. The nature of angels, which is expressed by the word spirits; so good angels are called spirits, and ministering spirits, Heb. i. 7, 14. and evil angels, unclean spirits, Christ gave his apostles power to cast out of the bodies of men, Mat. x. 1. Luke. x. 17, 20. that is, spiritual subsistences, they are real personal beings, that subsist of themselves. There was a sect among the Jews, the Sadducees, who said there was *neither angel nor spirit*, Acts xxiii. 8. and our modern Sadducees are not less absurd, who assert that good and evil angels, are no other than good and evil thoughts; but this is to be confuted, from the nature and names of angels; from the offices they bear, and are employed in; from the works and actions ascribed unto them; from the powers and faculties of will, understanding, and affections they are possessed of; and from the happiness and misery assigned to them that do well or ill. From all which it appears, that they are not imaginary, or *entia rationis*; nor mere qualities, but personal beings; and they are of a spiritual nature; not compounded of parts, as bodies are; and yet they are not so simple and compounded as God is, who is a Spirit; in comparison to him, they approach nearer to bodies; wherefore *Tertullian*, and some other of the fathers, asserted them to be corporeal, though with respect to bodies they are incorporeal. It is difficult with us to form any idea of a spirit; we rather know what it is not, than what it is; *A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have*, says Christ, Luke xxiv. 39. was it corporeal, a legion of spirits could never have a place in one man; nor penetrate and pass through bodies, through doors bolted and barred, as these angelic beings have: nor is it any objection to their being incorporeal, that they have sometimes appeared as men, since they have only seemed so; or they have assumed bodies only for a time, and then laid them aside: nor that they ascend and descend, and move from place to place; for this is said of the souls of men, which are incorporeal; and being spirits, or of a spiritual nature, they are possessed of great agility, and with great swiftness and speed descend from heaven, on occasion; as Gabriel did, who flew swiftly, having his order to carry a message to Daniel, at the beginning of his prayer, and was with him before it was ended; who must move as swift as light from the sun, or lightening from the heavens: and being without bodies, they are invisible, and are among the invisible things created by the Son of God, as before observed; and though it was a notion that obtained among the Jews in Christ's time, and does among the common people with us, that a spirit may be seen; it is a vulgar error, Luke xxiv. 37. Indeed, when angels have assumed an human form they may be seen, as they were by Abraham and Lot; and so when they appeared in the forms of chariots and horses of fire, around Elisha, they were seen by his servant, when his eyes were opened; but then these bodies seen were not their own; and these appearances were different from what they really were in themselves. Once more, being incorporeal and immaterial, they are immortal; they do not consist of parts, of matter capable of being disunited or dissolved; and hence the saints in the resurrection will be like them in this respect, that *neither can they die any more*, Luke xx. 36. God, who only has immortality originally and of himself, has conferred immortality on the angelic spirits; and though he can annihilate them, he will not; for even the evil spirits that have rebelled against him, though they die a moral and an eternal death, yet their beings, their substances, continue and perish not; everlasting fire, eternal punishment, is prepared for the devil and his angels.

III. The qualities and excellencies of angels may be next considered; and they are more especially three, holiness, wisdom or knowledge, and power.—1. Holiness; they are holy creatures, called holy angels, Mark viii. 38. and so they were created, even all of them: not indeed so holy as God is; for *there is none holy as the Lord*, 1 Sam. ii. 2. in comparison of him all creatures are unholy; *the heavens are not clean in his sight*, Job xv. 15. that is, the inhabitants of them, the angels; nor were they created immutably holy, but so as that they were capable of sinning, as some of them did; who, being left to the mutability of their own free will, departed from their first estate, which was a state of holiness, as well as happiness; and abode not in the truth, in the truth of holiness, in that uprightness and righteousness in which they were created; and they are called the *angels that sinned*, 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. John viii. 44. But others of them stood in their integrity, and are become impeccable; not owing to the power of their free will, and their better use of it than the rest; but to the electing grace of God, and the confirming grace of Christ, who is the Head of all principality and power, 1 Tim. v. 21. Col. ii. 10. These now as they persist in their obedience, they are perfect in it; hence the petition Christ directed his disciples to; *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*, Matt. vi. 10. they are subject to the same laws and rules of morality and righteousness, that men are, excepting such as are not suitable to their nature; as some duties belonging to the fourth, fifth, seventh, eighth, and tenth commands of the Decalogue; but to the rest in such manner as their nature will admit of; with all other orders, prescriptions, and directions of the divine will, they chearfully and constantly yield an obedience to; for they *do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word*, Psal. ciii. 20. — 2. Wisdom and knowledge; angels are very wise and knowing creatures; it is an high strain of compliment in the woman of Tekoah to David; *My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God; to know all things that are in the earth*, 2 Sam xiv. 20. yet it shews the general opinion entertained of the wisdom of angels; though in comparison of the all-wise and only-wise God, they are by him chargeable with folly, Job iv. 11. Very wise and knowing creatures no doubt they are; but they are not omniscient; they know much, but not every thing; they know much of themselves, through the strength and excellency of their nature, being rational and intelligent creatures, of the highest form and class; and by observation and experience, for which they have had a long time, and great opportunity; and also by divine revelation, through which they are acquainted with many things they otherwise would not know: they know much of God, being always in his presence, and beholding his face, and whose perfections displayed in his works, they have the clearest knowledge of; and much of their fellow-creatures, of the same species with them, the holy angels; who, having a language peculiar to themselves, can converse with, and communicate to each other; and much of the apostate angels, who they are set to oppose, conflict with, and counter-work; and much of men, of wicked men, on whom, by divine direction, they inflict the judgments of God; and of good men, the heirs of salvation, to whom they are sent, as ministering spirits: they know much of the mysteries of providence, in the execution of which they are often employed; and of the mysteries of divine grace, not only by divine revelation, but by the church, and by the ministry of the word, they attending the congregations of the saints; though it seems that this their knowledge is imperfect, since they bow their heads, and desire to pry more into these things: and there are many things which they know not, unless by marks and signs, in a conjectural way, or by a particular revelation; as the thoughts of men's hearts, which of others, men themselves know not, only the spirits of men within them; and which to know, peculiarly belongs to God, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men: nor do they know future contingencies, or what shall be hereafter, unless such as necessarily and ordinarily follow from natural causes, or may be guessed at, or are revealed unto them of God, in order to impart them to others; of the day and hour of the end of the world, and the last judgment, as no man knoweth, so neither the angels of heaven, Matt. xxiv. 36. Rev. i. 1. — 3. Power is another excellency of the angels; they are called mighty angels, and are said to *excel in strength*; that is, other creatures, 2 Thess. i. 7. Psal. ciii. 20. their strength is great, and their power and authority under God very large, yet finite and limited; they are not omnipotent, nor sovereign; they do not preside over the celestial bodies, move the planets, dispose of the ordinances of heaven, bind or loose their influences, and set their dominion in the earth; they have not the power of the air, nor the command of the earth; the world is not in subjection to them: they are capable indeed, under a divine influence, and by divine direction, help and assistance, of doing great and marvellous things; of holding the four winds of heaven; of quenching the violence of fire; and of stopping the mouths of lions; and of restraining other hurtful things: they have great power over the bodies of men, of moving them from place to place; as an evil spirit, by permission, carried Christ, and set him upon the pinnacle of the temple; and a good spirit caught away Philip, and carried him to Azotus: they have power, when they have leave, or are ordered to smite the bodies of men with diseases; as the men of Sodom with blindness, yea, with death itself, as seventy thousand Israelites, on account of David's numbering the people; and a hundred and forty-five thousand Assyrians in one night, as they lay encamped against Jerusalem; and Herod the king, who being smitten by an angel, was eaten of worms, and died. But the power of angels will still more appear under the following head, concerning,

IV. Their office and employment.

1. With respect to God; their work is to praise him, to celebrate the glory of his perfections; *Praise ye him, all his angels,* Psal. cxlviii. 2. and to worship him with his saints; we find them sometimes joining with men, with the living creatures and elders, in John's visions, in ascribing blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, and might unto God; and the same, in the same company, to the Lamb that was slain, Rev. v. 11, 12. and vii. 11, 12. and their work also lies in keeping the commandments of God, and doing his will in heaven and in earth; these are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth, to do his will and work in it; they wait his orders, and immediately go forth and execute them, Zech. vi. 4, 5.

II. With respect to Christ, on whom they are said to ascend and descend, as they did on Jacob's ladder, a type of him, Gen. xxviii. 12. John i. 51. these attended at the incarnation of Christ; one informed the virgin of her conception of him, removed her doubts about it, and explained to her the mystery of it; another encouraged Joseph to take her to wife, who thought to put her away, because of her pregnancy; and a third published the news of his birth to the shepherds; and who was presently joined with a multitude of them, who in chorus celebrated the glory of God, displayed therein. Yea, when God brought him, his first-begotten into the world, and manifested him to it in human nature, he gave orders to all the angelic host, to do him homage and worship, saying, *Let all the angels of God worship him,* Luke i. 30—35. Matt. i. 19, 20. Luke ii. 10—14. Heb. i. 6. these had the care and charge of him in his state of humiliation; they were solicitous for the preservation of his life in his infancy; when Herod sought to take it away, an angel gave notice of it to Joseph, in a dream, and directed him to take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt: and I see no reason why those wonderful escapes of Christ out of the hands of his enemies, in riper years, when just going to destroy him, may not be ascribed to the ministration of angels; since it is most certain, that God gave his angels charge over him, to keep him in all his ways; see Matt. ii. 13. Luke iv. 29, 30. John viii. 59. Psal. xci. 11. When he had fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness, these same excellent creatures came and ministered food unto him, Matt. iv. 11. and one of them attended him in his agony in the garden, and strengthened and comforted him, Luke xxii. 43. they were present at his resurrection, and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; and declared to the women at it, that he was risen from the dead, Matt. xxviii. 2. Luke xxiv. 4, 6, 23. they accompanied him at his ascension to heaven, even thousands of them; though only in the Acts of the Apostles, two are mentioned; by whom he was seen, and escorted through the region of the air, the territory of Satan, in triumph; and was received and welcomed to to heaven, Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. Acts i. 10, 11. 1 Tim. iii. 16. and by whom he will be attended at his second coming; for they will make a part of his glorious appearing, which will be in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and in the glory of his holy angels, 2 Thess. i. 7. Luke ix. 26.

III. With respect to the saints, to whom they are sent as ministering spirits; for though in some instances they may have a concern with others, yet that is chiefly in the behalf of the church and people of God, who are more especially their charge and care, both in respect to things temporal and spiritual.—With respect to things temporal, instances of which are.—1. Preserving them in their infant-state; there is a special providence concerned with the elect; as soon as they are born they are under the particular watch and care of it, and are distinguished by it; which is what the apostle means when he says, that *God separated him from his mother's womb*, Gal. i. 15. and which providence may be thought to be chiefly executed by the ministry of angels; for though it is not certain, which yet some scriptures countenance, Matt. xviii. 10. Acts xii. 15. that every one has his guardian angel, since sometimes more angels are deputed to one, and sometimes but one to many; yet doubtless saints from their birth are under the care of angels, and are preserved by them to be called; it is not known how many difficulties and dangers they are preserved from in infancy, in childhood, and in youth, as well as in riper years, by means of angels. — 2. Providing food for them when in want of it, or that they might not want it; as they ministered food to Christ in the wilderness; and prepared manna, called angels' food, because prepared by them in the air, and let down by them from thence, for the Israelites during their forty years travel; and as an Angel dressed food for the prophet Elijah, and called upon him to arise and eat, Matt. iv. 11. Psal. lxxviii. 25. 1 Kings xix. 5—8. — 3. Keeping off diseases from them, and healing of them according to the promise, *He shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence —neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; for he shall give his angels charge over thee, &c.* Psal. xci. 3, 7, 11. and if evil angels can, by divine permission, inflict diseases, as appears from the case of Job, and doubtless they would oftener do it, was it not for the interposition of good angels, why may not good angels be thought capable of healing diseases? and those many strange and wonderful cures wrought when all means have been ineffectual, may be ascribed, at least many of them, to the good offices of angels in directing to simple things, whose nature and virtue they are well acquainted with; and even they have cured diseases in a miraculous way, witness the pool of Bethesda, whose healing virtue for all diseases was owing to the agitation of its waters by an angel, John v. 4.— 4. Directing and protecting in journies, and at other times; thus Abraham, when he sent his servant to Mesopotamia to take a wife for his son Isaac, assured him that God would send an angel before him to direct and prosper him, which the servant found to be true, and blessed God for it, Gen. xxiv. 7, 27, 48. so Jacob as he was travelling, was met by the angels of God, who divided themselves into two hosts for his guard, and one went on one side of him and the other on the other; or one whent before him, and the other behind him; wherefore he called the name of the place where they met him Mahanaim, which signifies two camps or armies, Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. and even all that fear the Lord have such a guard about them, for *the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him*, Psal. xxxiv. 7.—5. Keeping from dangers, and helping out of them; when Lot and his family were in danger of being destroyed in Sodom, the angels laid hold on their hands and brought them forth, and set them without the city, and directed them to escape for their lives to an adjacent mountain, Gen. xix. 15—17. the preservation of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, in the furnace of fire, and of Daniel in the lions' den, is ascribed to angels, Dan. iii. 28. and vi. 22. the opening of the doors of the prison where the apostles were, and setting them free; and the deliverance of Peter from prison, whose chains fell from him, and the gate opened before him, were done by angels, Acts v. 19, 20. and xii. 7, 10.—With respect to things spiritual.—1. Angels have been employed in revealing the mind and will of God to men. They attended at mount Sinai, when the law was given; yea, it is said to be ordained by angels, and to be given by the disposition of angels, and even to be the word spoken by angels, Deut. xxxii. 2. Acts vii. 59. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2. And an angel published the gospel, and brought the good news of the incarnation of Christ, and salvation by him, Luke ii. 10, 11. An angel made known to Daniel the time of the Messiah's coming; as well as many other things relating to the state of the church and people of God, Dan. viii. 16—19. and ix. 21—27. and xii. 5—13. And an angel was sent to signify to the apostle John, the things that should come pass in his time, and in all ages to the end of the world, Rev. i. 1.— 2. Though the work of conversion is the sole work of God, yet as he makes use of instruments in it, as ministers of the word, why may he not be thought to make use of angels? they may suggest that to the minds of men which may be awakening to them, and may improve a conviction, by a providence, which may issue in conversion. However this is certain, they are acquainted with the conversions of sinners; and there is joy in heaven, and in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance, Luke xv. 7, 10. — 3. They are useful in comforting the saints when in distress; as they strengthened and comforted Christ in his human nature, when in an agony, so they comfort his members, as Daniel, when in great terror, and the apostle Paul, in a tempest, Dan. ix. 23. and x. 11, 12. Acts xxvii. 23, 24. and as when in temporal, so when in spiritual distresses; for if evil angels are capable of suggesting terrible and uncomfortable things, and of filling the mind with blasphemous thoughts, and frightful apprehensions; good angels are surely capable of suggesting comfortable things, and what may relieve souls distressed with unbelief, doubts and fears, and the temptations of Satan; for, —4. They are greatly assisting in repelling the temptations of Satan; for if they oppose themselves to, and have conflicts with evil angels, with respect to things political and civil, the affairs of kingdoms and states, in which the interest and church of Christ are concerned; see Dan. x. 13, 20. Rev. xii. 7. they, no doubt, bestir themselves in opposition to evil spirits, when they tempt believers to sin, or to despair; so that they are better able to wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickednesses in high places. Eph. vi. 12. see Zech. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4.—5. They are exceeding useful to saints in their dying moments; they attend the saints on their dying beds, and whisper comfortable things to them against the fears of death; and keep off the fiends of hell from disturbing and distressing them; and they watch the moment when soul and body are parted, and carry their souls to heaven; as they carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22. and thus Elijah was carried to heaven, soul and body, in a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which were no other than angels, which appeared in such a form, for the conveyance of him, 2 Kings ii. 11. —6. Angels, as they will attend Christ at his second coming, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; so they will be made use of by him, to gather the risen saints from the four quarters of the world, and bring them to him; to gather the wheat into his garner, and to take the tares, and even all things out of his kingdom that offend, and burn them, Matt. xiii. 40, 41. and xxiv. 31. From the whole it appears, that angels are creatures, and so not to be worshipped; which kind of idolatry was introduced in the apostle's time, but condemned, Col. ii. 18. the angels themselves refuse and forbid it, Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 8, 9. yet, notwithstanding, they are to be loved, valued, and esteemed by the saints, partly on account of the excellency of their nature, and partly because of their kind and friendly offices; and care should be taken to give them no offence, in public or private; see 1 Cor. xi. 10. for the saints are highly honoured, by having such excellent spirits to wait upon them, and minister unto them, and be guards about them; and it is no small part of their gospel-privileges, for which they should be thankful, that they are come to an innumerable company of angels, Heb. i. 14. and xii. 22.

OF THE CREATION OF MAN.

MAN was made last of all the creatures, being the chief and master-piece of the whole creation on earth, whom God had principally and first in view in making the world, and all things in it; according to that known rule, that what is first in intention, is last in execution; God proceeding in his works as artificers in theirs, from a less perfect, to a more perfect work, till they come to what they have chiefly in view, a finished piece of work, in which they employ all their skill; and which, coming after the rest, appears to greater advantage. Man is a compendium of the creation, and therefore is sometimes called a microcosm, a little world, the world in miniature; something of the vegetable, animal, and rational world meet in him; spiritual and corporal substance, or spirit and matter, are joined together in him; yea, heaven and earth centre in him, he is the bond that connects them both together; all creatures were made for his sake, to possess, enjoy, and have the dominion over, and therefore he was made last of all: and herein appear the wisdom and goodness of God to him, that all accommodations were ready provided for him when made; the earth for his habitation, all creatures for his use; the fruits of the earth for his profit and pleasure; light, heat, and air for his delight, comfort, and refreshment, with every thing that could be wished for and desired to make his life happy.

Man was made on the sixth and last day of the creation, and not before; nor were there any of the same species made before Adam, who is therefore called the first man Adam; there have been some who have gone by the name of Præadamites, because they held there were men before Adam. So the Zabians held; and speak of one that was his master; and in the last century one Peirerius wrote a book in Latin, in favour of the same notion; which has been refuted by learned men over and over. It is certain, that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, by one man, even the first man Adam; from whom death first commenced, and from whom it has reigned ever since, Rom. v. 12, 14. Now if there were men before Adam, they must have been all alive at his formation; there had been no death among them, and if they had been of any long standing before him, as the notion supposes, the world in all probability, was as much peopled as it may be now; and if so, why should God say, *Let us make man*, when there must be a great number of men in being already? And what occasion was there for such an extraordinary production of men? Why was Adam formed out of the dust of the earth? and Eve out of one of his ribs? and these two coupled together, that a race of men might spring from them, if there were men before? But is certain that Adam was the first man, as he is called; not only with respect to Christ, the second Adam; but because he was the first of the human race, and the common parent of mankind; and Eve, the mother of all living; that is, of all men living. The apostle Paul says, that God *has made of one blood*, that is, of the blood of one man, *all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth*, Acts xvii. 26. and this he said in the presence of the wise philosophers at Athens, who, though they objected to the new and strange deities, they supposed he introduced, yet said not one word against that account he gave of the original of mankind. But what puts this out of all question, with those that believe the divine revelation, is, that it is expressly said, that before Adam was formed, *there was not a man to till the ground*, Gen. ii. 5.

Man was made after, and upon a consultation held concerning his creation: *Let us make man*, Gen. i. 26. which is an address, not to second causes, not to the elements, nor to the earth; for God could, if he would, have commanded the earth to have brought man forth at once, as he commanded it to bring forth grass, herbs, trees, and living creatures of all sorts, and not have consulted with it: nor is it an address to angels, who were never of God's privy council; nor was man made after their image, he being corporeal, they incorporeal. But the address was made by Jehovah the Father to, and the consultation was held by him, with the other two divine Persons in the Deity, the Son and Spirit; a like phrase see in chap. iii. 22. and xi. 7. Isai. vi. 8. and such a consultation being held about the making of man, as was not at the making of any of the rest of the creatures, shews what an excellent and finished piece of work God meant to make. Concerning the creation of man, the following things may be observed.

I. The author of his creation, God; *So God created man*, Gen. i. 27. Not man himself; a creature cannot create, and much less itself; nor angels, for then they would be entitled to worship from men, which they have refused, because their fellow-servants, and it might be added, their fellow-creatures. But God, who is the Creator of the ends of the earth, was the Creator of the first man, and of all since; for we are all his offspring, and therefore are exhorted to *remember* our *Creator*, Eccles, xii. 1. or *Creators*; for so it is in the original text; for as they were more concerned in the consultation about man's creation, so in the creation of him; and the same that were in the one, were in the other, even Father, Son, and Spirit; hence we read of God our *Makers* in various passages of scripture, Job xxxv. 10. Psal. cxlix. 2. Isai. liv. 5. that God the Father, who made the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are, made man among the rest, and particularly made him, will not be questioned; nor need there be any doubt about the Son of God; since *without him*, the eternal Word, *was not any thing made that was made*; then not man; and if all things were made and created by him, whether visible and invisible, then man was made by him, who must be reckoned among these all things, John i. 1—3. Col. i. 16. The character and relation of an husband to the church, more particularly belongs to Christ; and her husband is expressly said to be her maker, Isai. liv. 5. compare also Psal. xcv. 6—8. with Heb. iii. 6, 7. Nor is the Holy Spirit to be excluded from the formation of man, who had a concern in the whole creation, Gen. i. 3. Job xxvi. 13. Psal. xxxii. 6. and to whom Elihu particularly ascribes his formation, Job xxxiii. 4. and why not the first man made by him also? yea, the act of breathing into man the breath of life, when he became a living soul, seems most agreeable to him, the Spirit and Breath of God; and who has so great a concern in the re-creation, or renovation of man, even in his regeneration. Wherefore the three divine Persons should be remembered as Creators, and be feared, worshipped, and adored as such; and thanks be given them for creation, preservation, and for all the mercies of life, bountifully provided by them. It is pretty remarkable that the word created should be used three times in one verse, where the creation of man is only spoken of; as it should seem to point out the three divine Persons concerned therein, Gen. i. 27.

II. The constituent and essential parts of man, created by God, which are two, body and soul; these appear at his first formation; the one was made out of the dust, the other was breathed into him; and so at his dissolution, the one returns to the dust from whence it was; and the other to God that give it; and, indeed, death is no other than the dissolution, or dis-union of these two parts; the body without the spirit is dead: the one dies, the other does not.

1. The body, which is a most wonderful structure, and must appear so when it is considered, with what precision and exactness every part is formed for its proper use, even every muscle, vein, and artery, yea, the least fibre; and that every limb is set in its proper place, to answer its designed end; and all in just symmetry and proportion, and in a subserviency to the use of each other, and for the good of the whole: to enter into a detail of particulars, more properly belongs to anatomy; and that art is now brought to such a degree of perfection, that by it most amazing discoveries are made in the structure of the human body[c]; as the circulation of the blood, &c. so that it may well be said of our bodies, as David said of his, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*, Psal. cxxxix. 14. The erect posture of the body is not to be omitted, which so remarkably distinguishes man from the fourfooted animals, who look downward to the earth; and by which man is fitted and directed to look upward to the heavens, to contemplate them, and the glory of God displayed in them; and even to look up to God above them, to worship and adore him, to praise him for mercies received, and to pray to him for what are wanted: as well as instructs men to set their affections not on things on earth, but on things in heaven; and, indeed, it is natural for every man, whether in any great distress, or when favoured with an unexpected blessing, and when he receives tidings that surprise him, whether of good or bad things, to turn his face upwards. In the Greek language man has his name *ανθρωπὸς*, from turning and looking upwards.

The body of man is very fair and beautiful: for if the children of man, or of Adam, are fair, as is suggested, Psal. xlv. 2. then most certainly Adam himself was created fair and beautiful: and some think he had the name of Adam given him from his beauty; the root of the word, in the Ethiopic[d] language, signifies to be fair and beautiful; and though external beauty is a vain thing to gaze at, and for men to pride themselves with, in this their fallen state, when God can easily by a disease cause their beauty to consume away as a moth; yet it is a property and quality in the composition of man at first not to be overlooked, since it greatly exceeds what may be observed of this kind in the rest of the creatures.

The body of man was also originally made immortal; not that it was so of itself, and in its own nature, being made of the elements of the earth, and so reducible to the same again; and was supported, even in the state of innocence, with corruptible food; but God, who only has immortality, conferred it on the body of man; so that if he had never sinned, his body would not have been mortal, or have died: nor is it any objection to it, that it was supported with food; for God could have supported it with or without food, as long as he pleased, or for ever; he could have supported it with food, not to take notice of the tree of life, which some think was designed as the means of con-

[c] See Nieuwentyt's Religious Philosopher, Vol. 1. [d] Vide Ludolph. Hist. Æthiop. l. 1. c. 15.

tinuing man's life perpetually, if he had not sinned; but without that, as God could and did support the body of Adam with food, even when it was become mortal through sin, for the space of nine hundred years and more, he could have supported it for the space of nine thousand, and so onward, had it been his pleasure; and therefore there can be no difficulty in conceiving that he could have supported it in an unfallen state, when it had the gift of immortality, in the same way for ever. Besides, God could, by a new act of his special grace and goodness have translated Adam to heaven, or to an higher state of life, to greater nearness and communion with him, and supported his body without food for ever; as the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, translated, that they should not see death; and have been some thousands of years supported without food; and as the body of Christ is, and the bodies of the saints that rose at his resurrection are; and all the bodies of men, after the resurrection, will be; and it is most clear, from the word of God, that death did not arise from a necessity of nature; but from sin; *Sin entered into the world, and death by sin* —— and *through the offence of one, many be dead* —— *the wages of sin is death* —— yea, it is expressly said, *the body is dead because of sin,* Rom. v. 12, 15. and viii. 10. and, indeed, to what purpose was that threatening given out, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,* Gen. ii. 17. if man of necessity must have died, whether he had sinned or no? as say the Pelagians and Socinians. But now, though this body was so wonderfully and beautifully formed and gifted with immortality, yet it was made out of the dust of the earth, Gen. ii. 7. that is macerated with water, and so properly clay; hence man is said to be made of the clay, and the bodies of men to be like bodies of clay; and to have their foundation in the dust, Job iv. 18. xiii. 12. xxxiii. 6. Isai. lxiv. 8. Hence some think that Adam had his name from *adamah*, earth, out of which he was formed, red earth, as Josephus calls it; as in Latin he is called *homo*, from *humus*, the ground. And this is an humbling consideration to proud man, and especially in the sight of God, when compared with him; and still more, as this clay of his is now, through sin, become frail, brittle, and mortal; and his dust, sinful dust and ashes, Gen. xviii. 27. and it may serve to take down the haughtiness and pride of some men, who vaunt over their fellow creatures, and boast of their blood, and of their families, when all are made out of one mass and lump of clay, and of one blood all the nations of men are formed.

II. The soul is the other part of man created by God; which is a substance, or subsistence; it is not an accident, or quality, inherent in a subject; but so capable of subsisting of itself; it is not a good temperament of the body, as some have fancied; nor is it mere thought; it is indeed a thinking substance in which thought is, and is exercised by it, but is distinct from it; it cannot be a mere quality, or accident, because that is not properly created, at least by itself, but is concreated, or created with the subjects in which it is: whereas the Spirit of man is formed or created of God within him, Zech. xii. 1. it is itself the subject of qualities, of all arts and sciences, and in its depraved state, the subject of vices, and of virtues and graces; it is an inhabitant of the body, dwells in it, as in a tabernacle, and removes from it at death, and exists in a separate state after it; all which shew it is a substance, or subsistence of itself. It is not a corporal but a spiritual substance; not a body as Tertullian, and others have thought; but a spirit, as it is often called in scripture, Eccles. xii. 7. Matt. xxvi. 41. Acts vii. 59. And the souls of men are called the spirits of all flesh, to distinguish them from angelic spirits, which are not surrounded with flesh, as the spirits of men are, Numb. xvi. 22. The soul is immediately breathed from God, as Adam's soul was; and in it chiefly consists the image of God in man, and therefore must be a spirit, as he is, though in a finite proportion, a created spirit; it is also immaterial; it does not consist of flesh, and blood, and bones, as the body does, and so is immortal, and dies not when that does; when that goes to the dust, the soul returns to God: the body may be killed by men, but not the soul; when they have killed the one, they can proceed no farther: the soul survives the body, and lives for ever; it consists of various powers and faculties, the understanding, will, &c. and performs various operations of life, either immediately by itself, or immediately by the organs of the body, in the vegetable, animal, and rational way; and therefore is called the *spirit*, or *breath of lives*, Gen. ii. 7. and yet is but one; for though sometimes mention is made of soul and spirit, as if they were distinct, 1 Thess. v. 23. Heb iv. 12. yet this only respects the superior and inferior powers and faculties of one and the same soul; for otherwise the scriptures always represent man as having but one soul; and this is created by God; it is not uncreated, as he is; nor is it created by angels, as some have fancied; nor of itself; nor is it generated by, and derived from immediate parents. The soul of Adam was most certainly created of God, and immediately, and breathed into him; and the same may be believed of the soul of Eve; for it cannot be thought that that was contained in, and educed out of the rib, from which her body was made; but that when that was made, God breathed into her the breath of life, as he did into Adam; and there is no reason why the souls of all men should not be made, or created, in like manner.

Some have been, and are of opinion, that the souls of men are *ex traduce*, as *Tertullian*; or generated by, and derived from their parents, with their bodies. But against this it may be observed, that Christ was made in all things like unto us, having a true body and a reasonable soul; which soul of his could not be generated by, and derived from his parents, not from a father, because he had none, as man; nor from his mother, for then she, being a sinful woman, it must have been infected and defiled with the contagion of sin, the corruption of nature; whereas he was holy and harmless, without spot and blemish. Moreover, if souls are by natural generation from their immediate parents, they must be derived either from their bodies, or from their bodies and souls, or from their souls only; not from their bodies, for then they would be corporeal, whereas they are not; not from both bodies and souls; for then they would be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, which they are not; not from their souls only, for as an angel is not generated by an angel, so not a soul by a soul. Besides, if the souls of men are derived from the souls of parents, it is either from a part of them, or from the whole; not from a part, for then the soul would be partible and divisible, as matter is, and so not immaterial; and as not a part, so neither can their whole souls be thought to be communicated to them, for then they would have none, and perish; to such absurdities is this notion reducible. Besides, what is immaterial, as the soul is, can never be educed out of matter; if the soul is generated out of the matter of parents, then it is, and must be material; and if material, then corruptible; and if corruptible, then mortal; and it is a maxim, that what is generated, may be corrupted; and if the soul may be corrupted, then it is not immortal; the doctrine of the soul's immortality, becomes indefensible by this notion; for if this be admitted, the other must be relinquished. But what puts this matter out of doubt is, the distinction the apostle makes between the *fathers of our flesh*, and the *Father of spirits*, Heb. xii. 9. Man consists of two parts, of flesh and spirit, body and soul; the former the apostle ascribes to mediate parents, as instruments thereof; and the latter to God, as the Father, Author, and Creator of it. Nor is it an objection of any moment, to the soul being of the immediate creation of God, that then a man does not generate a man: to which it may be replied, that he may be said to generate a man, though strictly speaking he only generates a part of him: as when one man kills another, he his truly said to kill a man, though he only kills his body; so a man may be said to generate a man, though he only generates the body; from whence in this case man is denominated. Moreover, as in death, the whole man may be said to die, because death is a dissolution of the whole, though each part remains; so the whole man may be said to be generated, because in generation there is an union and conjunction of the parts of man; though one part is not generated, yet because of the union of the parts, the whole is said to be so. Nor is it an objection of greater weight, that man does not do what other creatures do, generate the whole of their species; as a horse a horse, not only the flesh, but the spirit of it; since it is not at all derogatory to man, but it is his superior excellency, that his soul is not generated as the spirit of a beast is, but comes immediately from the hand of God. Such who are otherwise right in their notion of things, give into this, in order to get clear of a difficulty attending the doctrine of original sin, and the manner of its propagation, which they think is more easily accounted for, by supposing the soul derived from parents by natural generation, and so corrupted; but though this is a difficulty not easily to be resolved, how the soul coming immediately from God, is corrupted with original sin; it is better to let this difficulty lie unresolved, than to give up so certain a truth, and of so much importance, as the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is; which, as has been seen, must be given up, if this notion is received; but there are ways and methods for the clearing of this difficulty, without being at the expence of the loss of such an important truth; as will be shewn when we come to treat of the doctrine of original sin. In the mean while, let us take it for granted, that souls are of God's immediate creation; the making of them he claims to himself; *The souls that I have made*, Isai. lvii. 16.

The souls of men were not made in eternity, but in time. The pre-existence of all human souls before the world, a notion held by Plato, among the heathens, and espoused by Origen, among christians; but is exploded by all wise, thoughtful, and judicious men; for whatsoever was before the world was is eternal; if souls were created before the world, then they are eternal; whereas there was nothing before the world but God, to whom eternity only belongs, Psal. xc. 2. nor were souls created together, as angels were; but they are created one by one, when their bodies are prepared to receive them; they are not created without the body, and then put into it; but they are formed in it; *Who formeth the Spirit of man within him*, Zech. xii. 1. not brought ϑυραϑεν, from without, as Aristotle[e] expresses it: but when the embryo is fit to receive it, it is created by God, and united to it; but how it is united, and what is the bond of that union, we must be content to be ignorant of; as well as of the particular place of its abode, whether diffused through the whole body, as some think, or has an apartment in the brain, or has its seat in the heart, which is most likely, and most agreeable to scripture, and to that known maxim, that the heart is the first that lives, and the last that dies.

III. The difference of sex in which man was created, is male and female, Gen. i. 27, man and woman; not that they were created together: though on the same day, and perhaps not long one after the other: the male was created first, and out of him the female, as the apostle says, *Adam was formed, then Eve*, 1 Tim. ii. 13. which he observes, to shew that the woman should not usurp authority over the man, since he was before her; and by which it appears, that *the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man*, as he elsewere asserts, 1 Cor. xi. 9. and therefore ought to be in subjection to him: nor were they made out of the same matter, at least not as in the same form; their souls, indeed, were equally made out of nothing, out of no pre-existent matter, but their bodies differently: the body of Adam was formed out of the dust of the earth, and the body of Eve out of a rib of Adam, though both originally dust and clay, to which they both returned: the woman was very significantly made out of a man's rib; not out of the upper part of man, lest she should be thought to have a superiority over him; nor out of the lower part of man, lest she should be despised and trampled upon; but from a rib of him, to signify that she should be by his side, a companion of him, and from a part near his heart, and under his arm, to shew that she should be the object of his love and affection, and be always under his care and protection: and thus being flesh of his flesh, as he himself owned, it became him to nourish and cherish her as his own flesh. Man is a social creature, and therefore God in his wisdom though it not proper that he should be alone, but provided an help-meet for him, to be a partner and companion with him, in civil and religious life; and in this difference of sex were they created for the sake of procreation of children, and of the propagation of their species, in their successive offspring, to the end of the world; and there were but one male and one female, at first created, and which were joined together in marriage by the Lord himself, to teach, that but one man and one woman only are to be joined together at one time in lawful wedlock; and these two, male and female, first created, were made after the same image; for the word man, includes both man and woman; and Adam was a name common to them both in their creation, and when said to be made after the image of God, Gen. i. 26, 27. and v. 1, 2; which image, as will hereafter be seen, lies much in righteousness and holiness. Now God made man, that is, both man and woman, upright; but they, Adam and Eve, sought out many inventions, sinful ones, and so lost their righteousness: nor is it any objection to the woman being made after the image of God, part of which lies in dominion over the creatures, as will hereafter be observed, that she is in subjection to the man; for though her husband ruled over her, yet she had equal dominion with him over the creatures. Which leads on to consider,

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[e] De Generat. Animal. l. 2. c. 3.

IV. The image of God in which man was created; *God, said, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness —— so God created man in his own image*, Gen. i. 26, 27. Whether image and likeness are to be distinguished, as the one respecting the substantial form of man, his soul; the other certain accidents and qualities belonging to him; or whether they signify the same, is not very material; the latter seems probable; since in Gen. i. 27. where image is mentioned, likeness is omitted; and, on the contrary, in Gen. v. 1. the word likeness is used, and image omitted. Now though this is only said of man, that he is made after the image and likeness of God, yet he is not the only creature so made; angels are like to God, and bear a resemblance to him, being spirits immaterial, immortal and invisible, and are also righteous and holy in their nature, and are sometimes called *Elohim*; yet the image of God in man, differs in some things from theirs; as that part of it especially, which lies in his body, and in his connection with, and dominion over the creatures; and yet he is not in such sense the image of God, as Jesus Christ the Son of God is, who is the image of the invisible God, yea, the express image of his Father's Person, having the same divine nature and perfections he has; but man, though there was in him some likeness and resemblance of some of the perfections of God; which are called his imitable ones, and by some communicable; as holiness, righteousness, wisdom, &c. yet these perfections are not really in him, only some faint shadows of them, at least not in the manner and proportion they are in God, in whom they are infinite, in man finite; and the renewed and spiritual image of God in regenerate persons, which is of an higher and more excellent kind than the natural image of God in Adam, is called a partaking of the *divine* *nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. yet not to be understood as if any partook of the nature and essence of God, and the perfections of it; only that that is wrought in them, and impressed on them, which bears some resemblance to the divine nature.

The seat of the image of God in man, is the whole man, both body and soul; wherefore God is said to create man in his image; not the soul only, nor the body only; but the whole man, Gen. i. 27. and v. 1. Even as the whole man, soul and body, are the seat of the new and spiritual image of God in regeneration and sanctification; *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly*; which the apostle immediately explains of their *whole spirit, and soul and body, being preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*; when and at the resurrection of the dead, the saints will most fully appear to *bear the image of the heavenly One*, 1 Thess. v. 23.

1. The first man was made in the image of God in his body in some respect; hence this is given as a reason why the blood of a man's body is not to be shed, because, *In the image of God made he man*, Gen. ix. 6. though this image must not be thought to consist in the lineaments and figure of man's body; this would be to conceive of him as altogether such an one as ourselves, and as the Anthropomorphites do; who, because they find bodily members ascribed to God in scripture, as eyes, hands, &c. fancy that he has a body like ours, and that our bodies are like his; but, as Job says, *Hast thou eyes of flesh?* No; he has not; and the same may be observed of other members ascribed unto him; for we are not to entertain such gross notions of God as if he was corporeal, or that man was like unto him in the structure of his body; not but that there is something divine and majestic in the countenance of man, in comparison of brute creatures; and what is superexcellent to them, is the erectness of his posture, as has been before observed; which fits and directs him to look up to God, whereby he has a nearness to him, and communion with him, through which he becomes more like unto him. And it may be observed, that the perfections of God, many of them, are represented by the members of the human body; as his omniscience and all-seeing providence by eyes, which go to and fro throughout the whole earth. His omnipresence, and close attention to the petitions of his people, and readiness to help and assist them, by ears open to their cries; and his might and power to deliver, protect, and defend them, by an arm and hand; and his pleasure and displeasure, by his face being towards good men, and against bad men; with others that might be added. Some qualities in the body of the first man, he had from God, which made him in some sense like unto him: such as immortality; for not only the soul of man breathed into him, was immortal, but his body also, as has been before observed; and in this there was in him some likeness to God, who only hath immortality in the highest sense of it. Likewise righteousness and holiness, another branch of the divine image, as will be hereafter taken notice of; of which the body, as well as the soul, is the seat; for as that is defiled, since the fall, with the corruption of nature; so before, it was pure and holy; as when sanctified by the

Spirit of God, it becomes a temple, in which he dwells; and particularly at the resurrection, when it is raised a powerful, incorruptible, spiritual and glorious body, saints will then awake in the likeness of God, and appear to bear the image of the heavenly One, as in soul so in body; and whereas another branch of this image lies in dominion over the creatures, that is chiefly exercised by the organs of the body. To say no more, I see no difficulty in admitting; that whereas all the members of Christ's human body were written and delineated in the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees, before they were fashioned, or were in actual being; and God prepared a body for him in covenant, agreeable thereunto; or it was concluded in it, he should assume such a body in the fulness of time, Psal. cxxxix. 16. Heb. x. 5. I say, I see no difficulty in admitting that the body of Adam was formed according to the idea of the body of Christ in the divine mind; and which may be the reason, at least in part, of that expression; Behold, the man is, or rather was as one of us; and so as Eve was flesh of Adam's flesh, and bone of his bone, the members of Christ are also flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.

11. The principal seat of the image of God in man, is the soul, which was immediately breathed of God into man, and so bears the greatest resemblance of him; and thus the spiritual image of God, stamped in regeneration and renovation, is chiefly seated in the soul; *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind*, Eph. iv. 23. And this appears,

1. In the nature of the soul, which is spiritual, immaterial, immortal, and invisible, as God is; God is a Spirit, most simple and uncompounded; more so than any created spirit can be supposed to be; yet the soul, which is often called a spirit, bears some likeness to him: he is expert of all matter, and only hath immortality; and so the soul is not a material being, but a spirit, it has not flesh and bones, as a body has; and is not capable of being brought to the dust of death, or to be killed: and as no man has seen God at any time, he is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible; so the soul is not to be seen; who ever saw his own soul, or the soul of another? Moreover, the soul carries some shadow of likeness to God in its powers and faculties, being endowed with understanding, will, and affections; which are, in some respects, similar to what is in God; or there is that in God, which these are a faint resemblance of; and though it consists of various faculties, there is but one soul; as God, though his perfections are many, and his Persons three, yet there is but one God.

2. The image of God in the soul of man, of the first man particularly, appeared in the qualities of it; especially in its wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and in its righteousness and holiness; for if the spiritual image in regeneration consists in these things, though in a higher and more excellent manner, and of a superior nature; it may be reasonably thought, the natural image of God in man, consisted of these things in a natural way; Col. iii. 10. Eph. iv. 24.

It lay in knowledge and understanding. Adam, in his state of innocence, had a large share of natural knowledge: he knew much of himself, both of the constitution of his body, and the powers of his mind; he knew much of the creatures made and given for his use, and over which he had the dominion, and to whom he gave names suitable to their nature; he had a large knowledge of God, as his Creator and Benefactor in a natural way, through the creatures, for if God, and the perfections of his nature, are in some measure to be known from his works by the light of nature, now man is fallen, and so as to be left without excuse; a much greater degree of knowledge of him, must man unfallen be supposed to have: and who, doubtless, had knowledge of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, since they were so manifestly concerned in the creation of all things and particularly in his own; and this seems necessary, that he might yield that worship and adoration, which was due from him to each of them; but then he knew nothing of Christ, as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; this was not revealed to him until after his fall, nor did he need it before; on which it was made known to him, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and be the Saviour of him and his posterity; nor did he know any thing of pure, spiritual, and evangelic truths, and which were not suitable to the state in which he was; such as justification by the righteousness of Christ; pardon of sin through his blood; atonement by his sacrifice; and eternal life, as the free gift of God through him: these were things his eye had not seen, nor his ear heard of, nor did it enter into his heart to conceive of, before his fall, and the revelation of them to him, which was made upon that; but then he knew all things necessary to be known by him; all things natural, moral, and civil; yea, he had some things revealed to him, and which he knew under a prophetic spirit; some things past, as the formation of Eve out of his rib; and, no doubt, his own formation, and the manner of it; and the whole creation, and the order of it, in six days; and other things to come, as that Eve should be the mother of all living; and that marriage, as it was appointed, would be continued in the world, for the propogation of his species.

The image of God in Adam, further appeared in that rectitude, righteousness, and holiness, in which he was made; for *God made man upright*; a holy and righteous creature, Eccles. vii. 29. which holiness and righteousness were, in their kind, perfect; his understanding was free from all error and mistakes; his will biassed to that which is good; his affections flowed in a right channel, towards their proper objects; and there were no sinful motions and evil thoughts in his heart; nor any propensity and inclination to that which is evil; and the whole of his conduct and behaviour was according to the will of God. And this righteousness of his was natural, and not personal and acquired; it was not obtained by the exercise of his free will; it was lost, but not got that way; had it been personal, and acquired by his own power, and made up of acts of his own, when lost, it would only have been lost for himself; and his posterity would have had no concern in it; but it was the righteousness of his nature, it was concreated, or created with it, and so common to it; and had he stood in it, would have been propagated to his posterity; but, on the contrary, he sinning, whereby his nature was defiled, a corrupt nature is propagated instead of it. The papists, and those of the same complexion with them, say that Adam was created in his pure naturals; their meaning is, that he was created neither holy nor unholy; neither righteous nor unrighteous; but capable of being either the one or the other, as he made use of the power of his free-will. This notion is advanced in favour of man's free-will, and to weaken the doctrine of original sin.

This image also lies in the freedom of the will, and the power of it. As God is a free agent, so is man; and as the freedom of the divine will does not lie in an indifference, and indetermination to good and evil, but is only to that which is good; so was the will of man in his state of integrity: as likewise the will of the good angels, and glorified saints. And man had a power to obey the will of God, and do his commands; and as he had not only a positive law given him to abstain from the forbidden fruit, as a trial of his obedience; so he had the moral law written on his heart, as the rule of his obedience, and had power and ability to keep it; for as it was required of him to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and soul, and strength; so he could, if he would, have performed the same; and such strength and ability were due unto him, from the laws of creation; for if God required of him obedience to his holy law, it was but fit and right that he should give him a conformity of nature and will to it, and power to obey it; though he was not obliged to give him grace and strength to persevere, nor to render him impeccable and immutable; wherefore, leaving him to the mutability of his will, he sinned, and fell from his former estate, which on that account is called *vanity*, Psal xxxix. 5.

3. The image of God in the whole man, soul and body, or in his peron, lay in his immortality, natural to his soul, and conferred on his body; and also in his dominion over the creatures; for this was the end God proposed in the creation of him, that he might have dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea; and accordingly all were put in subjection to him; in which he resembled God, the Governor of the universe; and hence kings, governors, and civil magistrates are called gods, because they bear such a likeness to him.

4. This image lay in the blessedness of man, in his original state; for as God is God over all and blessed, and is the blessed and only Potentate; so man, in a lower sense, was blessed above all the creatures; having an healthful constitution, an immortal body, and every thing grateful and suitable to it; and a soul knowing, wise, holy, just, and good; and he placed in the most delightful spot in the whole globe, with all the profusion of nature about him, and all creatures subject to him, enjoying communion with God, through the creatures, though but in a natural way; and God was pleased sometimes to appear to him, and talk with him; and yet man, being thus in honour, abode

not long, but became like the beasts that perish; so that we may look back and see from what an high estate man is fallen, and to what a low estate sin has brought him, by means of which he is come short of the image and glory of God, in which he was created; and yet may adore the grace and wisdom of God, which has brought us into a more excellent state by Christ; a state more spiritual, firm, and secure. Adam's knowledge was natural knowledge; his holiness and righteousness, natural holiness and righteousnes; the covenant made with him, a natural covenant; the communion he had with God, was in a natural way; and all his benefits and blessings natural ones: but believers in Christ are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and have a spiritual image enstamped upon them, which can never be lost; and into which they are changed from glory to glory, till it becomes perfect.

OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

THE next external work of God is providence; by which all the creatures God has made are preserved, governed, guided and directed. The word itself is never used of the divine Being syllabically, or in so many syllables in scripture; yet the thing itself, or what is meant by it, is fully declared and clearly expressed; as, that God upholds all things by his power; governs the world by his wisdom; looks down upon the earth, takes notice and care of all his creatures in it, and makes provision for them, and guides and directs them to answer the ends for which they were made; which is the sum and substance of providence: nor need we abstain from the use of the word on that account since there are many other words used to express christian doctrines, not to be found in the Bible, though the things expressed by them are, as trinity, satisfaction, &c. nor because it is taken from the school of Plato, who is said to be the first that made mention of the providence of God in so many words, nor because used by the Stoic philosophers, and other heathens, who have wrote and spoken well of a divine providence. It is once used in scripture, of the civil administration of a Roman governor, (Felix,) by Turtullus the orator, when he pleaded before him against the apostle Paul, whom he compliments on the *great quietness* the Jews enjoyed under his government, and *the very worthy deeds done unto* their *nation by* his *providence*, Acts xxiv. 3. that is, by his wise and prudent administration of government, and the provident care he took of the peace and welfare of the Jewish nation; as he would be understood. And if the word may be used of such an administration of government; or of that of a civil magistrate; then much more of the great Governor of the world, whose is the kingdom of the whole world, and he is the governor among the nations; whose kingdom rules over all, and who does according to his will and pleasure in heaven and in earth; and does all things well and wisely.

Providence, of which we are now about to treat, must be considered as distinct from prævidence. prævision, prescience, foresight, foreknowledge, and predestination; which all respect some act in the divine mind in eternity; and are no other than the eternal purposes and decrees of God, who foresaw and foreknew all persons and things that would be; he determining within himself that they should be; for *known unto him* were *all his works from the beginning*, or from eternity; even all that would be done in time, from the beginning to the end of the world; he knew they would be, because he decreed they should be; this may be called eternal providence, virtual providence, providence in purpose; but providence in time, which is what is now under consideration, and may be called actual providence, is the execution of whatsoever God has foreknown and determined; *Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will*, Eph. i. 11. the eternal will of God is the rule of his conduct in providence, according to which he proceeds in it; and his wisdom, which fixed his will, and therefore said to be the counsel of his will, presides, guides, and directs in the execution of it; which execution of it is called his working; wherefore providence is to be reckoned as his work. The wise man says, *There is a time to every purpose under the heaven*; whatever is done under the heavens in time, there was a purpose for it in eternity; and for the execution of that purpose, a time was fixed; and at that time it is brought about by the providence of God; who *makes every thing beautiful in his time*; in the time and season in which he appointed it to be done, Eccles. iii. 1—11. Purpose and providence, exactly tally and answer to each other; the one is the fulfilment of the other; *Surely, as I have thought*, saith the Lord, *so shall it come to pass*; *and as I have purposed, so shall it stand*, Isai. xvi. 24.

The providence of God is not only expressed in scripture, by his sustaining, upholding, and preserving all things; and by his government of the world, and the execution of his purposes; but by his looking down upon the earth; and the inhabitants of it; taking a prospect of them, and notice of their ways, and works, and actions, and dealing with them according to them; *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, &c.* Psal. xiv. 2. and xxxiii. 13, 14. The providence of God may be argued from, and illustrated by the senses which he imparts to men, for their good, preservation, and safety; particularly those of hearing and seeing. He has placed the eyes and the ears in the head of the human body, to look out after and listen to what may turn to the advantage or disadvantage of the members of the body; hence the Psalmist reasons, *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?* He must needs hear all that is said, and see all that is done in the world, and must know and take notice of all persons in it, their works, their words, and even their very thoughts; as it follows; *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vanity*, Psal. xciv. 9—11. All which is observed, to convince brutish and ignorant people, who act as if they disbelieved the providence of God, 3—8.

The words provide and providing, are sometimes used of men in general, and of masters of families in particular, who are to provide things honest in the sight of all men, both for themselves, and for all under their care; and, *If any provide not for his own, he is worse than an infidel,* Rom. xii. 17. 1 Tim. v. 8. and which provision, incumbent on such persons, may give us an idea of the providence of God; in that branch of it particularly, which concerns the provision which he, as the great Master of his family, throughout the whole universe, makes for it, even from the greatest to the least; *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season,* &c. Psal. cxlv. 15, 16. even the very ravens and their young, such mean and worthless creatures, are provided for by him; *Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God?* Job xxxviii. 41. and how much more does he not, and will he not provide for rational creatures? It was an instance of great ingratitude and unbelief in the Israelites, that after many tokens of divine goodness to them, they questioned the power of God to take care of them; saying, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?—Can he give bread also?—Can he provide flesh for his people?* Yes, he could and did for six hundred thousand Israelites, besides women and children; and he can and does provide food for all his creatures, rational and irrational; and he can and does provide for men, what is necessary for them, when in the greatest extremity. From God's providing a sacrifice in the room of Isaac, when just going to be slain on mount Moriah, it became a proverbial expression in after times, *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*; or *the Lord will appear*; or, *will provide*, and grant supplies, and deliver out of difficulties, Gen. xxii. 8, 14. and from the provision which God makes for all his creatures, as the great Master of the family, Providence, which with the heathens was reckoned as a deity, is represented like a good housewife, or mistress of a family, administering to the whole universe, and was pictured like a grave elderly matron[f]: and this is one of the titles of the goddess Minerva[g].

The providence of God is expressed by his care of his creatures; *Doth God take care of oxen?* 1 Cor. ix. 9. He does, and even of creatures inferior to them; and much more then of those who are superior to them; even of all rational creatures; and especially of them that believe; who therefore are encouraged to be *casting all* their *care upon him, for he careth for them,* 1 Pet. v. 7. It is particularly said of the land of Canaan, that it was *a land which the Lord careth for*; from one end of the year to the other, Deut. xi. 12. and it is true of the whole world in general, that God cares for it, and all creatures in it; not only from year to year, and from age to age, but from the beginning of the world to the end of it. Now God's sustentation of the world, his government of it, the view and notice he takes of it, the provision he makes for all creatures in it, and his care of, and concern for them; this is providence. And now, having considered the name and thing, and what is meant by it, I shall proceed,

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[f] Vid. Chartarium de Imag. Deorum, p. 8, 9.

[g] Pausan. Phocica, sive l. 10. p. 629.

I. To prove a divine providence, by which all things are upheld, governed, uided, and directed.

1. This appears from the light of nature; for as by that it may be known ıat there is a God who has created all things; so by the same that there is a rovidence that superintends, orders, and disposes all things. Hence the hea-ıens held a providence; all nations, even the most barbarous[h]; all the sects f the philosophers owned it, but one, the Epicureans, and that from a foolish otion that it was unworthy of God, affected his happiness, and interrupted is peace and quiet. Pythagoras[i] says there is a kindred between God and men; ıd that God exercises a providence over us. Plato[k] gives this reason for his eing the soul of the universe, or why he thought that was a living creature, ecause it was under the providence of God; and it is affirmed by the Stoics[l], ıat the world is inhabited by the mind and providence of God; the mind dis-ensing and administering through every part of it, as the soul in us; and that God governs the world by his providence, and all things in it. Seneca wrote book on providence, in which he says[m], providence presides over all, and God is in the midst of us. Menedemus, the philosopher, was an advocate for ne doctrine of providence[n]. Chrysippus wrote on the same subject also[o]. They are the words of Cicero[p], that by the providence of God, the world, and ll the parts of it, were both constituted at the beginning, and administered by t at all times: and the apostle Paul, in a discourse of his before the philoso-hers at Athens, concerning God and his providence, produces a passage from Aratus, one of their own poets, in proof of the same; *We are also his offspring,* Acts xvii. 28. his creatures, his children, and his care; in whom we live, nove, and have our being. Even God's sustentation of irrational creatures, is preservation of them, and the provision he makes for them, prove a provi-lence; wherefore Job, chap. xii. 7—10. sends his friends to them to learn his; *Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee, &c.*

II. Divine providence may be concluded from the Being of God; the same rguments that prove the one, prove the other; if there is a God, there is a providence; and if there is a providence, there is a God; these mutually prove each other; as he is a fool that says there is no God, he is equally a fool that says there is no providence: these are closely connected together, and cannot be the one without the other; wherefore, when the Psalmist had observed, that the fool said in his heart, there is no God, he immediately observes the providence of God; *The Lord looked down from the heaven upon the children of men,* Psal. xiv. 1, 2. And such in all ages who have denied a providence, have been looked upon as atheists. Hence Cicero[q] observes of Epicurus, that though he made use of the word God in his philosophy, that he might not offend the Athenians; yet in reality it removed him from it. And the same writer[r] thus reasons: if it is granted there is a God, it must be owned, that the administration of the world is by his counsel; and again, those who allow there is a God, must confess that he does something, and something famous and excellent; and nothing is more excellent than the administration of the world; and therefore it must be by his counsel. And to me, says Lucilius[s], he that does nothing, seems entirely not to be, to have no being; so closely connected are God and his providence, according to the reasoning of this wise heathen: the oracle of Apollo, at Miletus, calls providence the first-born of God[t]: and it is easy to observe, that the Lord puts the idolatrous heathens upon proving the truth of the deities they worshipped, by acts of providence; by declaring things past; foretelling things to come; and by doing good or evil; bestowing good things on their votaries, and avenging their enemies; all which he claims to himself, and which could not be proved to belong to them; and therefore no deities; for a deity without foresight, and without forecast, unactive and impotent to do good or evil, to reward or chastize men, could be no deity; see Isai. xli. 22, 23.

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[h] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 2. c. 31. [i] Laert. in Vita Pythagor. [k] In Timæo, fol. 30. [l] Laert. l. 7. in Vita Zenonis. Arrian. Epictet. l. 2. c. 14. [m] De Providentia, c. 1. [n] Tertullian. Apolog. c. 18. [o] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 6. c. 1. Laert. l. 7. in Vita Zeno. [p] De Natura Deorum, l. 2. [q] Epicurus re tollit oratione relinquit Deos. ibid. l. 1. in fine.

III. The providence of God may be argued from the creation of the world; as the Being of God may be proved from thence, so the providence of God; for if the world was created by him, it must be upheld by him; for as it could not make itself, so neither could it sustain itself; the same power that was requisite to create, is necessary to uphold it; and therefore it may be observed, that creation and conservation, which is one branch of providence, are closely joined together, Col. i. 16, 17. God, the great builder of all things, does not act by them as an architect, that builds an house and has no farther concern with it, but leaves it to stand or fall of itself; or that builds a ship, and has nothing more to do with it; he takes the government of it, and steers and directs it; he that is the Creator of the world, is the Governor of it; the Creator is not one, and the governor another, but the same; and is as equal to the government of it, as to the creation of it; and creation gives him a right to govern; and without his support and government of it, it could not long subsist: besides, there must be some ends for which it is created; which ends it cannot attain and answer of itself; but must be directed and influenced by the Creator of it.

IV. The perfections of God, and the display of them, make a providence necessary, particularly his power, wisdom, and goodness: since God has created the world, had he not supported it, but left it to chance and fortune, it would have seemed as if he could not have supported it; then where had been the greatness of his power, and the glory of it, who is said to be the Almighty? and since he made it with some views, and to answer some ends, had it not been influenced, guided, and directed by him, to answer these ends; where had been the wisdom of him, who is called the all-wise and the only-wise God? and to make a world of creatures, and then neglect them, and take no care of them, where would have been his goodness? Whereas, the whole earth is full of it; and he is good to all his creatures; and his tender mercies are over all his works; so that from these perfections of God, we may be assured of his providence.

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[r] De Natura Deorum, l. 2. [s] In Cicero ibid. [t] Apud Lactant. l. 7. c. 18.

v. It may be concluded from the worship of God; which this is a powerful inducement to, and the ground of. The Being of God is the object of worship; and his providence is the basis of it; without this there would be no fear of God, no reverence from him, no adoration of him: the two main branches of worship are prayer and praise; but if God has no regard to his creatures, and they receive nothing from him, nor have an expectation of any from him, what have they to pray to him for? or what to praise him for? Nor what have they to fear from him, if they have no connection with him, and are not accountable to him? Hence Cicero could say, "There are some philosophers, (meaning the Epicureans) who suppose that God takes no care at all of human affairs; but, says he, if this is true, what piety can there be? what sanctity? what religion?" Wherefore they are the libertines of the age, who in any period, as the followers of Epicurus, deny the providence of God; and this they do, that they may have the reins loose on their own necks, and be under no restraint, but at liberty to indulge to the gratification of every sensual lust; such were those of that cast among the Jews, who said, *The Lord hath forsaken the earth; and the Lord seeth not*, and therefore we may do as we please; there is none to observe what we do, nor to call us to an account for it; *The Lord will not do good, nor will he do evil*; neither bestow favours on good men, nor correct and punish evil men, Ezek. ix. 9. Zeph. i. 12. And hence, because it has been observed, that good men are afflicted, and wicked men prosper which some have improved into an argument against divine providence, which will be considered hereafter; this has been inferred from it, that it is in vain to serve God, and no profit to keep his ordinances, Mal. iii. 14, 15.

vi. The settled and constant order of things, from the beginning of the world to this time, clearly evince a divine Providence; the ordinances of the heavens, of the sun, moon, and stars, have never departed from their stated and fixed order and appointment; nor the covenant of the day and of the night ever been broken, Jer. xxxi. 35. the sun goes forth every morning, like a giant to run his race; takes his circuit from one end of the heavens to the other, and with great exactness observes his rising and setting, and makes every day in the year; and who also performs his annual course with great precision, and who also finishes every returning year; and this course he has constantly ran almost six-thousand years: can this be thought to be the effect of chance, and not of an all-wise, all-powerful, and all-disposing Providence, which has so long supported it in its being, supplied it with light and heat, given and continued its motion unto this day? the constant revolution of night and day; and of the seasons of the year; of seed-time and harvest; of cold and heat; and of summer and winter, are standing and perpetual proofs of a divine providence; since these take place every year in their order, throughout the whole world, according to the different climates of it. Were there only now and then an instance of such an order of things, it might not deserve so much notice; but that it should be constant and continued, can never surely be thought to be the sports of chance and fortune: and especially when it is observed, that so much, and things of the greatest importance, depend upon such a constant revolution of them, with respect to the welfare of mankind. Every year, in the winter-season, grass, herbs, and plants, wither and seem to die; trees are stripped of all their fruit and verdure, and look as if they were dead; when, in the returning spring, which never fails to come, there is a reproduction of all these, a sort of a new creation of them; *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit; they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth*, Psal. civ. 30. Can this be observed, as it may with amazement, and a Providence denied! To all which may be added, the constant succession of men in all ages; *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh*, so that the earth is continually replenished with inhabitants, notwithstanding so many are daily taken off by death, in various shapes. All which can never be without an all-wise disposing Providence.

VII. Were there not a supporting and superintending providence concerned in the world, and the things of it, all would soon fall into confusion and destruction. If God, that has hung the earth upon nothing, without any support than his own power, was to withdraw his hand and let go his hold, it would drop into its original chaos, the earth, and the inhabitants of it would soon and easily be dissolved, did not the Lord bear up the pillars of it, and where anarchy takes place, and no government is, there is confusion and every evil work. In familes, in bodies of men gathered tumultuously together, and in towns, cities, kingdoms and states, where is no head, no governor, none to preside, guide and direct, dissipation and ruin quickly ensue; and so it would be with the world in general, if not governed and superintended by a divine providence. The founding of kingdoms and states, and the setting up of political government in the world, are a proof of divine providence: and one way and means by which it is exercised, as will be seen hereafter; and even the erection of the great monarchies of the earth, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman, and the dissolution of them, shew a divine providence: those monarchies could never have risen to the height they did, nor come to the destruction they have, but by that providence *that removeth kings and setteth up kings* at pleasure, Dan. ii. 21.

VIII. The many blessings of goodness, the daily benefits and favours, which are continually bestowed by God on his creatures, manifestly declare his providence; all creatures partake of his goodness, he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil, he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust; he has not left himself without a witness of his providential goodness in any age to any people, Jews or Gentiles, in that he has done good unto them, given them rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.

IX. The judgments of God in the earth, at different periods of time, are a demonstration of the providence of God. Who can believe that the universal deluge, the sweeping away of a world of ungodly men by a flood, and saving eight persons only in an ark, were the effects of chance, and not of providence? and that the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, with the cities of the plain, by fire and brimstone from heaven was by accident, as a common fire is sometimes said to be? the same may be observed of the plagues of Egypt, the drowning of Pharoah and his host in the Red sea, the captivities of the Israelites, the destruction of their neighbours, the Moabites, Edomites, &c. so that the name of one of them is not to be found in the world, as was foretold; when they, though scattered up and down in it, are yet preserved. The earthquakes, famine, pestilence, fire and sword, which are frequently in the world, shew a divine providence; for God is *known by the judgments which he executeth*, Psal. ix. 16.

X. The fears of punishment and hopes of reward in men, shew the consciousness they have of the notice God takes of them and their actions, which is one branch of providence. Their fears, either of judgments coming upon them now, or of a future judgment, at which Felix trembled when he heard of it, plainly declare their sense of a divine Being, and of his knowledge of their conduct and behaviour, and resentment of it; who they justly fear will punish them for it, here or hereafter; why else were some of the Roman Cæsars, as Augustus, Tiberius, and Caligula, so terribly frighted at thunder and lightening; but because they were convinced there was a God in the heavens, from whence they came, who saw and knew all their wicked actions, and to whom they were accountable? and this is to be observed, more or less, in all mankind; whose consciences accuse or excuse, according to their actions; if evil, their minds are filled with dread, and a fearful expectation of wrath and vengeance; if good, they entertain hopes of receiving good things here, and better hereafter; which is a clear proof from men themselves, and they are obliged to own it, and say, *Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth*, Psal. lviii. 11.

II. I proceed to observe some distinctions which have been used by some, and may be useful to explain and confirm the doctrine of providence.

1. Providence may be considered as immediate and mediate. Immediate providence, is what is exercised by God of himself, without the use of any mean, instrument, or second cause: thus the world is upheld by himself, by his own power, without the intervention of any other; and every creature, as to its being, and subsistence, is immediately dependent upon him; in whom all live, move, and have their being; God sometimes works without means, as when he made the earth fruitful before any rain, or dew or mist, fell upon it, or before

there was any man to till it, Gen. ii. 5, 6. and as he supported the body of Moses in the mount, and of Christ in the wilderness, without food, for the space of forty days and forty nights; and as he sometimes has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth; which is one branch of providence; and has given victory over enemies without fighting, as to the Israelites at the Red sea; to the same, in the times of Joshua, before the walls of Jericho; and in the times of Gideon over the Midianites; and in the days of Jehoshaphat over the Ammonites, and others. Sometimes he works over and above means, and what means cannot reach unto, which exceeds the power of nature; of this kind are all miraculous operations; such as those wrought in Egypt; and by Christ and his apostles; as turning water into wine; and multiplying a little food for the supply of multitudes. Yea, God works sometimes contrary to the nature of things, of means, and second causes; as when he caused waters, which naturally flow or stand, to rise up and become heaps, and divide, and be as a wall, to the right and left, as the waters of the Red sea and Jordan were to the Israelites, and through which they passed as on dry land; and as when he caused the Sun, which naturally goes forth and forward as a giant to run his race, to stand still, as in the days of Joshua; and to go back ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz, in the times of Hezekiah; and he suffered not fire to burn, which it naturally does, combustible things; even not so much as to singe the garments of Daniel's three companions, when cast into a furnace of fire; and to cause lions, naturally voracious, to shut their mouths and not touch Daniel, when cast into their den. All which God sometimes does; that is, acts immediately, and without the use of means, and even above them, and contrary to them; to shew that he is not tied to means and second causes; and that his people, those that trust in him, may not despair when things are at the worst, and there appears no way of deliverance; but to exercise faith in the God of providence, who is all-wise and all-powerful, and can and will appear for them, and be seen in the mount of difficulties; see Dan iii. 16, 17. Mediate providence is what is exercised in the use of means, or by them; and which God does, not from any defect of power in him; but, because of the abundance of his goodness, that he might communicate, as it were, some dignity of efficiency to the creatures; and in them make his own efficiency the more discernible: hence it may be observed, that he sometimes makes use of means to produce great and noble effects, which are unlikely, and for which they do not seem to have any aptitude; as when with a small army, an handful of men, comparitively speaking, he gives victory over a large one; for there is no restraint or hindrance to him; and it is nothing with him to save by many or by few; and whether with many, or with them that have no power. Sometimes he makes proper means ineffectual to answer the end of them, and for whch they seem to be well adapted; for what seems more for the safety of a king and his country than a well mounted cavalry, and a well-disciplined and numerous army? and yet these are sometimes of no service, and are vain things for safety. And what more fit to support the lives of men, and to refresh and nourish when hungry, than wholesome food? yet men may eat, and not have enough, or be nourished by it, Hos. iv. 10. Indeed ordinarily God does work by means; he makes the earth fruitful by snow and rain descending upon it; whereby it gives seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; produces grass for cattle, and herb for the service of men; with other necessaries of life. Their is a chain of second causes that depend upon the first, and are influenced by it, and act in subordination to one another; the Lord hears the heavens, and the heavens hear the earth, and the earth hears the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they hear Jezreel, Hos. ii. 21, 22. And usually God supplies and supports the bodies of men by means of food, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, by giving a blessing thereunto. And he exercises his providence, commonly by the use of means, to shew men that they are to make use of means, and not slight them; no, not even when events are certain to them; as the cases of Hezekiah and Paul's mariners shew, Isai. xxxviii. 21. Acts xxvii. 31. Yet means, or second causes, are never to be depended on; but the first Cause is to be looked unto for success, and to him the glory is to be given,

11. Providence may be considered both as ordinary and extraordinary.—Ordinary providence, is what is exercised in the common course of means, and by the chain of second causes; and according to the original law of nature impressed on beings from the beginning. From this law, the ordinances of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, have not departed, except in extraordinary cases; and the revolutions of day and night, and of the seasons of the year, are constantly and regularly observed; and all things act and move by an inclination of nature settled in them; fire burns, and sparks fly upwards; heavy bodies descend, and light ones ascend; in animate and irrational creatures there is an instinct of nature suitable to their natures, by which they are guided and directed, and do not ordinarily swerve from it: and even in inanimate creatures, as the meteors of the air, snow, rain, hail, &c. there is an obediential power and influence, by which they perform the will of their creator, and answer the ends for which they were made. Extraordinary providence is that in which God goes out of his common way; and which consists of miraculous operations, as before observed, such as exceed the power of nature; as when he ordered rocks to be smitten, and waters gushed out to supply the Israelities, their flocks and their herds; and rained manna about their tents every morning in the week, except one, by which he supported them near forty years in a wilderness; and so the prophet Elijah, though the food he was fed with was ordinary and common, yet it was in an extraordinary manner that he was furnished with it; ravens brought him bread and flesh morning and evening, whilst he was by the brook Cherith: and he was supplied with food at Zarephath, in a widow's house, through the very extraordinary multiplication of an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and when in a wilderness, had a cake baked for him by an angel, and a cruse of water set at his head, of which he

eat and drank; and in the strength of which he travelled forty days and forty nights.

III. Providence may be considered as universal and singular; or, as general and particular. Universal or general providence, is what is concerned with the whole world, and all things in it; and is expressed by upholding and preserving all things that are created; it is God's suntentation, preservation, and continuance of creatures in their being; this is acknowledged by some, who yet do not agree to,—A singular or particular providence, as concerned with every individual, and especially with rational creatures and their actions. But most certain it is, that God not only in his providence is concerned for the world in general, but for all individuals in it; every star in the heavens is known by him, taken notice of, and preserved; *He bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names*, Isai. xl. 26. the cattle on a thousand hills, and the thousands of cattle on those hills, are known and provided for by him; and so are all the fowls of the air, and of the mountains, and even a sparrow does not fall to the ground without his notice and will, Matt. x. 29. He looks down upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and considers their ways, and works, and actions, Psal. xxxiii. 13—15. The sentiments of the Stoic philosophers come the nearest to those of divine revelation, concerning this matter; which, according to Cicero [v], are, that not only mankind in general, but that singulars, or individuals, are cared and provided for by the immortal gods: and yet Seneca [w], one of that sect says, that the gods take a greater care of universals than of singulars; and elsewhere, that they take care of mankind in general, and sometimes are careful of singulars, as if they were not always careful of them; and Cicero [x], though he represents Balbus the Stoic, as saying that the gods take care of singulars; yet with this exception, that with respect to some externals, they take care of great things, but neglect small ones. Sallustius [y], the Cynic philosopher, is very express; he says, Providence and fate, as they are concerned about nations and cities, so about every man; and so Plato [z] strongly argues, that the providence of God is concerned about less as well as greater matters; and according to the christian doctrine, as will be seen hereafter; not only men, but the most minute things are under the notice of providence.

IV. Providence may be considered as both common and special. Common providence is that which belongs to the whole world, and all the creatures in it, and to all mankind, and is exercised in the common and ordinary way; for God is *good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 9. Special providence is what concerns the church of God in all ages. The Jewish church, under the former dispensation, was distinguished from all the people of the earth, and chosen to be a special and peculiar people, and had special favours bestowed upon them; and the christian church, under the gospel-dispensation, was particularly cared for at the beginning of it, and remarkably

[v] De Natura Deorum, l. 2. prope finem. [w] De Providentia, c. 3. [x] Ut supra. [y] De Diis, c. 9. [z] De Legibus, l. 10. p. 98, &c. in Epinomide, p. 1008.

ncreased and preserved under the persecution of the heathen emperors; and vhich has been, and will be, nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, n the wilderness, during the reign of antichrist, and then will become great and lorious. Moreover, God, as the God of providence, is the Saviour and Preerver of all men; but especially of *them that believe*, 1 Tim. iv. 10. And the rovidence respecting God's elect, will be particularly considered hereafter.

v. Providence may be considered as real and moral: real, is what concerns hings, and the essence of them, by which they are sustained and preserved. Ioral providence, or what is commonly called God's moral government of the vorld, respects rational creatures, angels and men, to whom God has given a aw, as the rule of their actions, which consists of precepts and prohibitions, the anctions of which are promises and threatenings; and it is explained and enforced y instructions, persuasions, admonitions, &c. and according to which reasonble law, a reasonable service is required of reasonable creatures. God deals vith them as their works and actions appear to be. Of this providence of God, especting angels and men, especially in their first estates, and change of them, particular notice will be taken of in some following chapters. I shall next bserve,

III. The Author of providence, the efficient Cause of it, and the instruments nade use of by him in the administration of it. God, that is in the heavens, nd looks down upon the earth, does in it whatever he pleases; he sitteth King or ever, and his kingdom rules over all. Elihu puts such a question as this, *Who hath disposed the whole world?* Job xxxiv. 13. the answer to it must be, He that made it, has a right to dispose of it, and of all things in it; and he does lispose thereof according to his pleasure; *All things are of him*, in creation; and all things are *through him* in providence; and all things are *to him*, directed and ordered to his glory, Rom. xi. 36. God, Father, Son, and Spirit, are the one efficient Cause and Author of providence. God, the Father of Christ; *My Father worketh hitherto*, not in creation; for the works of creation were finished in six days; and then God ceased from his work; but in providence, in which he worked from the beginning of the world, to the time of Christ on earth; and continued to work; for he says not, my Father hath worked, but worketh, continues to work in a providential way; for the work of providence is his work; *Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will*, Eph. i. 11. which is said of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus; who has blessed his people in Christ, chosen them in him, and predestinated them by him to the adoption of children; and who is spoken of all along in the context to the passage cited. Our Lord addresses his Father as *the Lord of heaven and earth*, the Maker and Possessor of both, and Governor of them, when he is speaking of a sovereign act of his in providence; hiding some things from the wise and prudent, and revealing them to babes; and adds, *All things are delivered unto me of my Father*, to subserve the ends of his mediatorial kingdom in a providential way, Matt. xi. 25.

Christ, the Son of God, is equally concerned with his divine Father in the work of providence; *My father worketh hitherto*, as before observed; *and I work*, the same work jointly along with him; for *whatsoever things he*, the Father, *doth, those also doth the Son likewise*, John v. 17, 19. *By him all things consist*; are sustained, upheld, preserved, and supplied, and guided, to answer the ends for which they are created by him, Col. i. 16, 17. Nor is the holy Spirit to be excluded from the work of providence, who had so great a concern in that of creation; the heavens were garnished by him; yea, the host of them were made by him; he moved upon the waters that covered the chaos, and brought it into a beautiful form and order; and several of the works of providence are particularly ascribed to him; the renovation and reproduction of things every returning spring are ascribed to him; *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created; thou renewest the face of the earth*, Psal. civ. 30. the government of the world, and the ordering and disposing of all things in it, are attributed to him, without the counsel and direction of others; *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, &c. or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? &c.* Isai. xl. 13, 14. And he that is so much concerned in the regeneration, conversion, and sanctification of men, and has been in all ages of the world, with which the affairs of providence are so closely connected in numberless instances, can never be shut out of the administration of them. Father, Son, and Spirit, are the efficient cause of providence; and to whom, and not to fate, fortune, and chance, are all things in it to be ascribed. The instruments God makes use of in the administration of providence are many; some of the principal of which are as follow:

1. Angels, good and bad. Good angels are the ministers of God that do his pleasure; these stand continually before him, wait his orders, hearken to the voice of his commandments, and are ready to perform any service he shall enjoin them, or send them to do; *These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth*, into the several parts of the world, when sent by him, to execute his will and pleasure; they are *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who are heirs of salvation*; to guard and protect them, and do many good offices for them, as has been observed in a preceding chapter; see Psalm ciii. 19, 20. Zech. vi. 5. Heb. i. 14. Evil angels are also sometimes employed in the affairs of providence; either for the inflicting of punishment on wicked men, or for the correction and chastizement of the people of God. They were made use of in the plagues of Egypt; for the Psalmist says, God *cast* upon the *Egyptians, the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, by sending evil angels among them*, Psal. lxxviii. 49. In the execution of what particular plagues they were concerned, it is not easy to say; probably they were sent at the time of the plague of darkness, to terrify and affright, and add to the horror of that dreadful scene. An evil spirit offered himself to be a lying spirit, in the mouths of Ahab's prophets, which he had leave to be, and thereby brought about, in providence, the death of that prince, in a

battle at Ramoth-Gilead, as was foretold, 1 Kings xxii. 21—34. Satan, the adversary of good men, obtained leave from the Lord, to destroy the substance, family and health of Job; which was granted for the chastizement of him, and for the trial of his faith and patience. The same malicious spirit put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray his Lord, as was foretold; whereby the crucifixion of Christ, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, was effected; and by that the redemption and salvation of men. The coming of antichrist, was after the working, and through the efficacy of Satan, by divine permission, with all power and signs, and lying wonders; with which so many things in providence have been so closely connected more than a thousand years past, and will be to the end of his reign.

11. Kings, princes, and civil magistrates, good and bad, have been, and are, instruments in the hands of God, for the executing of his providences in the world; the powers that be, are ordained of God, and are ministers of his, to some for good, who do good and behave well; to others for evil, for vengeance, to execute wrath upon them, Rom. xiii. 1, 4. and because they have their power and authority, their commission and capacity from God, and are his vicegerents, and act under him, and personate him, and are representatives of him; hence they are called gods, Psal. lxxxii. 6. *By him good kings reign and princes decree justice*; from him they have wisdom and capacity to make good laws, and power to put them in execution, for the good of men; such an one was David, raised up by God to fulfil his will; there have been but few of this sort; but some there have been, and more there will be in the latter day, when kings shall be nursing fathers to Zion, and queens nursing mothers; the seven angels that shall have the vials of God's wrath to pour forth on the antichristian states to their destruction, are seven christian kings, or protestant princes, who will have a commission from God to do that work. Evil kings, however, such who have had no true knowledge of God, have been raised up, and made use of in providence, to do great things in it; either for the good of the church and people of God, as Cyrus king of Persia, whom the Lord girded, though he knew him not, and held his right hand to subdue nations, and particularly Babylon; that he might be in a capacity, and have an opportunity of letting go the captive Jews in it, and of delivering them from their bondage, and of giving them liberty to rebuild Jerusalem, and the temple in it, as was foretold of him two hundred years before he was born, Isai. xliv. 28. And sometimes wicked princes have been used as scourges of God's people, and for the correction of them; as Sennacherib king of Assyria; of whom it is said; *O Assyria, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation!* that is, the indignation of God, the execution of it, was put into his hands, as a rod and staff, to chastize the people of the Jews for their hipocrisy and other sins, which were provoking to God; Howbeit he, the Assyrian monarch, *meaneth not so; neither doth his heart think so*, that he is an instrument, in the hand

of God, to correct his people; *but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off, nations not a few*, to gratify his ambition, pride, and cruelty, Isai. x. 5—7. So the ten kings, who have given their kingdoms to the antichristian beast, and become vassals to him, God put it into their hearts to do it, to fulfil his will in providence, which they knew nothing of, Rev. xvii. 17. an Egyptian philosopher made use of this as an argument of divine providence, shewing that all men were governed by God, since in every thing that ruled and governed, there was something divine.

III. Ministers of the word, and masters of families, are, in their respective stations, instruments in the execution of the affairs of providence. The work of ministers lies much in convincing men of sin, and in turning them from it, and directing them in the way of their duty, as well as in the way of salvation; and it has a very close connection with the providence of God, which is exercised therein and thereby. Masters of families, both by their instructions and examples, are very serviceable in providence to those that are under them; and, indeed, every man, in whatsoever station he is, has a work to do, which in providence, is ordered and disposed to answer some end or another.

IV. Even irrational creatures are employed in providence to execute some parts of it; the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, being at the beck and command of the great creator of them. The noisome beast is one of God's four judgments which God has sometimes inflicted on wicked men; this he threatened the Jews with in case of disobedience to him; two she-bears by divine direction, came out of a wood, and tore in pieces two and forty children, for mocking a prophet of the Lord; and Lions were sent among the idolatrous Samaritans, to punish them for their idolatry, nay, not only creatures of such bulk and strength have been made use of in providence, but even the meanest and most minute, as flies, frogs, lice and locusts, which were four of the plagues of Egypt; and the latter is called the Lord's army, and his great camp, which sometimes have a commission to destroy a whole country, and strip it of herbs and plants, and every green thing, Joel ii. 11. the fowls of the air, the ravens, those voracious creatures, were employed in providence, to carry bread and flesh, morning and evening, to the prophet Elijah; and the fishes of the sea also have been made use of, God prepared a fish to swallow up Jonah, when he was cast into the sea, and he spake unto it, commanded and gave it orders to throw him upon the shore again; and a fish furnished Peter with a piece of money to pay the tribute for himself and his Master.

V. Inanimate creatures, the several meteors in the air, are under the direction of providence, and subservient to it. God has his treasures of snow and hail, which he reserves against the day of trouble, against the day of battle and war, and which artillery of heaven he sometimes plays upon the inhabitants of the earth; hail was one of the plagues of Egypt, by which, not only grass, herbs, plants and trees were battered down, but both cattle and men destroyed; and in a battle with the Canaanites, in Joshua's time, more of them were killed by hail-stones from heaven, than by the Israelites; and sometimes others of the meteors are made use of in a way of mercy, as those mentioned in a way of judgment; so snow and rain, by commission, descend on the earth to refresh it, and make it fruitful, whereby it brings forth what is beneficial to man and beast: in short, every meteor in the heavens is at the command of God, and does his will; *Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word,* Psal. cxlviii. 8.

Now, whatever good or evil come to the children of men, by any and all of these instruments, are not to be attributed to them, but to the God of providence, who makes use of them to bring about his designs. All the good things of life, the wealth and riches men are possessed of, let them come by them in what way they may, by inheritance, by bequest, or by their own industry, yet all must be ascribed to God; *Riches and honour come of thee,* says David, 1 Chron. xxix. 12. he had amassed together a vast quantity of riches, great part of which, at least, he got by his victories over the Moabites, Syrians, &c. but who gave him the victory? God; and therefore, as he ascribes his military honour and glory, so his riches to him; in like manner as Job, through the providence of God, became the greatest man in the East for worldly substance, as well as other things; so by the same providence he lost all; and though the Sabeans and Chaldeans were the instruments of it, he does not impute it to them, nor to Satan, who instigated them to it; but to the Lord: saying, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,* Job i. 21.

IV. The several parts and branches, or acts of providence, of which it consists, are next to be considered; and they are chiefly these two, conservation, or preservation of all things created, and the government of them; or the wise and orderly disposal of them, to answer the ends for which they are made and preserved.

Conservation, or preservation of creatures, and the sustentation of them in their being; which is expressed by these several phrases, *Thou preservest them all*; that is, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and seas, and all therein, Nehem. ix. 6.—*Upholding all things by the word of his power*; Heb. i. 2, 3.—*By him all things consist,* even all things created by him in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, Col. i. 16, 17. It may be proper to consider the necessity of God's sustaining and preserving the creatures made by him; and then shew to what and to whom this preservation extends and reaches.

1. That the sustentation and preservation of the creatures in their being, is of God, and must be so, and which may be proved,

1. From the nature and perfections of God, particularly his independence. God is an independent Being; all creatures depend on him, but he on none; *Of him, through him, and to him are all things,* Rom. xi. 36. If creatures could or do support and preserve themselves in their being, they would be independent, and then there would be more independents than one, and so more

gods than one, which cannot be admitted; there is but one potentate, God over all, on whom all depend.

2. From the nature of creatures, which is to be dependent on the Creator; he that gives them life and breath, gives them all things for the support and preservation thereof; yea, in himself they live and move and have their being; he not only grants them life and favour, but his visitation preserves their spirits; and this is true of all the creatures that have life, and breath, and motion; all depend upon God for the continuance of them; and even of rational creatures, *he holdeth our soul in life*, in union with the body, in which it lives, Acts xvii. 25, 28.

3. From the weakness of creatures to support and preserve themselves. If any creature could preserve itself, it might be thought that man could; but he cannot; he cannot preserve himself from disorders and diseases of body; if he could, he would not be attended with them: he cannot preserve himself from death; could he, none would ever die; but *there is no man that hath power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death*; to keep it off from him; *there is no discharge in that war*, Eccles. viii. 8. nor can any man preserve his brother, friend, or near relation, so as they should live for ever, and see no corruption; for then none, for whom an affectionate regard is had, would ever die; nay, men cannot preserve their cattle, in which the chief substance of some men lies; could they, these would always be in good plight and case, and stand, and never fail; their sheep would continue to bring forth thousands, and their oxen would be always strong to labour, Psal. xlix. 7, 9.

4. The same power that was put forth in creation, is required and is necessary, for the preservation of the creatures made; eternal power was exerted, and is to be seen in the things that are made, and by the same almighty power all things are upheld, hence creation and preservation are so closely connected, Nehem. ix. 6. and, indeed, preservation is no other than a continued creation.

5. Was God to withdraw his supporting hand and preserving power and influence, creatures would soon come to destruction and perish; the whole fabric of the world would at once fall to pieces; *The earth, and all the inhabitants of it, are dissolved*, that is, they would be, were it not for what follows; *I bear up the pillars of it*, Psal. lxxv. 3. Creatures, whilst God supports and supplies them with his hand of providence, they live; but when he hides his face, or withdraws his hand they are troubled, die, and return to their dust, Psal civ. 27. Job was sensible that he was held in life by the hand of God; he therefore desires he would let loose his hand, let go his hold of him, and then he should drop and die, for which he was solicitous, vi. 9.

6. The whole world is a building, and God is the architect of it; He that built all things is God; but this building differs from any building of man. A man may erect an edifice, and when he has done, leave it to itself, to stand or fall; and it does stand without him, and oftentimes subsists many years after the architect is dead; the reason of which is, that such an edifice is only the

effect of art; the builder does not make the materials of it, the stone and the timber; he finds them made to his hand; he only figures them for his purpose, and puts them together: and this is all that is necessary for him to do. But God, the great architect, has not only put together the world, and all things in it, in the beautiful order he has; but he has made the very matter of which it consists, and for the support of that his almighty power that created it, is requisite and necessary.

7. Every creature is made for some end, and therefore it is necessary it should be preserved and continued until that end is answered; *The Lord hath made all things for himself*; Prov. xvi. 4. wherefore it may be strongly concluded, that as God has made all things to answer some subordinate ends to one another, and ultimately for his own glory; he will, as it is necessary he should, preserve them, that such an end may be answered, as it is in fact; *All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord!* Psal. cxlv. 10.

II. To what and to whom this preservation extends and reaches. It includes all the creatures God has made; the phrases by which it is expressed, as before observed, shew this; which declare that God preserves them all; that he upholds all things, and that by him all things consist; the world in general, and every individual in it; *O Lord, thou preservest man and beast*, Psal. xxxvi. 6. yea, every other creature.

1. Some of the individuals of the creation are sustained and preserved, as they were from the beginning; the *prima materia*, the first matter, of which all things were made, still continues; for matter is never annihilated, though it passes into different forms and figures. The whole world, which was made of it, is so established, as that it cannot be moved, Psal. xciii. 1. the form, figure, and fashion of it pass away, but the matter and substance of it remain. The ordinances of the heavens, and the heavens themselves, are as they were when first created; the sun is supported in its being, continued in its motion, and constantly supplied with light and heat, which it continually emits; for nothing is hid, as from the light, so neither from the heat of it; the stars, every one of them, keep their place, their station or course; because that God is strong in power, who sustains and preserves them, *not one faileth*, Isai. xl. 26. for what are called falling stars, are not stars, but meteors kindled in the air, which burn and blaze awhile, and then run and fall. A new star, so called, because not seen before, sometimes appears, but no one is lost. The heavens God has established by his understanding and power, so that they remain as they were; and though it is said they *shall perish, wax old as a garment, and as a vesture be changed and folded*, yet as a garment folded up still remains, though in a different form; so the heavens will not perish, as to matter and substance, but be changed, as to form, quality, and use, in which respect they will be new and continue; and the same may be said of the earth; for God *has laid the foundations of it, that it should not be removed for ever*, Psal. civ. 5. and though it underwent some change at the universal deluge, so that the apostle distinguishes the earth that then was,

from that which now is, yet as to substance it is the same; and though at the general conflagration, the earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, and a new earth will rise up out of it; yet the same as to matter and substance, only different as to form, an earth without a sea; and as to quality, being purified and refined; and as to use, only to be inhabited by righteous persons, 2 Pet. iii. 5—13. Angels and the souls of men, are preserved in being, as they were first created; angels die not, nor do the souls of men, when their bodies do, but survive them, and live in a separate state till the resurrection.

2. Some of the individuals of creatures, which are subject to corruption and death, are yet preserved, as long as it is the pleasure of God; as the beasts of the field and the bodies of men; for *he preserveth man and beast*, Psal. xxxvi. 6. the brute creatures wait upon him, and he gives them food for their sustenance, by which they are supported; and then when he pleases he takes away their breath and they perish. Man springs up like a flower, and flourishes for a while, and then is cut down; God sends him into the world to do his will, or to do some work by him, and when that is done, he changes his countenance, and sends him away, Psal. civ. 28. but though the individuals of various sorts of creatures die, yet they are preserved and continued in their species; thus, though herbs, and plants, and trees, wither and seem to be dead, or are dead in the winter-season, yet in the spring those that were withered revive; or, if dead, others spring up in their room, or are raised up by seed; so that there is a constant succession of vegetables. Cattle, and fowls, and fishes, though consumed in great numbers for the use of man, or on other accounts; yet their species is propagated by them, so that there is the same sort of creatures of all kinds, as were at the first creation; and though thousands of men die every day, in one place or another, all put together, yet still a race of men is continued; *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever*, and is full of inhabitants, Eccles. i. 4.

The other branch of providence is government, or the wise and orderly disposal of all creatures, to answer the ends for which they are made and preserved. God is the Governor of the whole universe; and he has a right to govern it, who is the Creator of it; the kingdom of nature is his, and so is the kingdom of providence; and he is the Governor among the nations; his government is very extensive, all creatures are subject to him; his kingdom rules over all, and it is an everlasting one; and his dominion endures throughout all generations. And as the government of the world is a branch of providence; so from the wise and orderly disposition of things in it, it may be strongly concluded there is a Providence; or that there is a God, who by his providence governs, guides, orders, and directs all things in the world: for if a man comes into a house, or a school, or a court of judicature, and takes notice of the order, manner, and discipline of things observed therein, he must conclude within himself, there is some one who presides there, and who is obeyed; and much more in such motions, in such vicissitudes and orders, and of so many

ind such great things, in which there is never any failure, one must needs con-
lude, that such motions of nature are governed by an intelligent Being.

1. Inanimate creatures are governed, and guided, and directed by the provi-
lence of God, to do those things for which they were created, and so answer
he ends of their creation; there is a law of nature, as has been before observ-
d, impressed upon such creatures, which they constantly obey; there is an in-
lination of nature in them to such and such actions, which they perpetually
ollow; so the sun naturally pursues his course, and takes both his daily and
early circuit from one end of the heavens to the other, and exactly knows and
bserves his rising and setting; there is an obediential power and influence, by
hich creatures without life and sense are actuated, and to which they attend
ith as much precision, as if they heard the order, and understood the will of
eir Creator; thus the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and fall
pon the earth by direction; that drinks in the rain that comes upon it, receives
e seed cast into it, cherishes and fructifies it, and throws it up again; whereby
brings forth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; and so in numerous
ther instances.

II. Animate creatures, but irrational, are governed, guided, and directed in
rovidence, by an instinct of nature, placed in them by their Creator, to such
ctions as are agreeable to their nature, and from which they scarce ever swerve,
us with what art and skill do birds build their nests? with what tenderness
o they cherish and provide food for their young? that little creature the ant,
ough it has no guide, overseer, or ruler, no visible and external one, yet pro-
ides its meat in the summer, and gathers its food in harvest; an example this
f industry and diligence, care and foresight to human creatures; this is one of
e four little things on earth Solomon speaks of, which, though little, are exceed-
g wise through an instinct in nature, put into them by the God of nature and
rovidence. The ants, he says, are a people not strong, far from it, very weak,
et prepare their meat in the summer for the winter; the conies are but a fee-
le folk, yet are so wise under the direction of providence, and by an instinct
nature, as to make their houses in the rocks, to shelter them from danger and
urt; the locusts have no king, to command and direct them, yet they go forth
l of them by bands, march in rank and order, like a well disciplined army;
e spider taketh hold with her hands, on the thread of her webs, she spins, and
in king's palaces, where, though her webs are often destroyed she weaves them
gain. Birds of passage, as the stork, the turtle, the crane, and the swallow,
now the appointed times of their going and coming, and exactly observe them,
er. viii. 7. Multitudes of instances of this kind might be given.

III. Rational creatures, as angels and men, are governed in a moral way, by
law, which for substance is the same to both, according to their different na-
ure and circumstances; particularly men have either the law and light of na-
ure to guide them, or a written law to direct them; and according as they be-

have towards it, they are dealt with; to those that are good, and do good, it is well with them, now and hereafter; and for the present, God makes all things work together for their good; to the evil, and to them that do evil, it goes ill with them, and they shall eat the fruit of their doings, now, or in the world to come. And there is a concourse of providence which attends all men, all their actions, yea, even their words and thoughts, Prov. xvi. 1, 9. xxix. 21. all which are over-ruled by providence, to answer some end or another; yea, even evil actions themselves, as in the case of Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt; they, in so doing, thought evil against him, and did evil in it; but God meant it for good, and over-ruled it for that purpose, to save many people alive, Gen. l. 20. but of this more hereafter. Moreover, men are governed as rational creatures, in a political way; kings and princes, as has been before observed are instruments by whom God governs and administers this part of the affairs of providence; he sets up kings and judges at his pleasure, and enjoins men obedience to them; who are ministers of his, and through the power and authority they are entrusted with, are terrors to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well. I proceed to consider,

V. The object of providence; which is the whole universe, all the creatures of it, and whatever is done in it.

1. The whole inanimate creation, or creatures without life, whether in the heavens or in the earth, are subject to divine providence, and under the direction of it, and act according to antient and original laws, which the Author of them has imposed upon them, and from which they do not swerve.

1. The luminaries of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars, these were made at first for various uses, for signs and seasons, and for days and years, and to give light to the earth by day and by night; and they are continued and employed by divine providence, for the said purposes and uses for which they were created. The sun is not only supported in its being, directed in its course, and continued to perform its office, as has been observed, but it daily sheds its benign influences upon the earth, to make it fruitful; hence we read of *precious fruits brought forth by the sun*, Deut. xxxiii. 14. and by the order of God in providence, all men partake of the benefits of it; for *he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good*, Matt. v. 45. it is at his command, he can stop it at his pleasure, and hide it from men; *He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not*; or, is not seen for days together; he causes it *to go down at noon*, as it seems to do in an eclipse, *and darkens the earth in a clear day*, Job ix. 7. the same may be said of the moon, that is supported, continued, and directed in providence to answer the ends of its creation; it was appointed for seasons, to distinguish times, as it does; to give light by night, of which use it is, and to influence the earth and seas; hence we read of precious things brought forth by the moon; and that it is at the command of the God of providence, appears by its being stopped and stayed, when the sun was, in the days of Joshua; the stars are the host of heaven, God's militia, which he sometimes employs in

providence, in favour of his people, and against their enemies; *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*, Judg. v 20. they are of use, in providence, to mariners on the mighty waters; the loss of which was sensibly felt by the apostle Paul, and those with him, when for many days neither sun nor stars appeared, Acts xxvii. 20. and when such is the case, then it is that God sealeth up the stars.

2. The meteors in the heavens are under the direction of providence; the clouds and winds, hail, rain, snow, and dew, thunder and lightening: the providence of God is greatly concerned in the ordering, directing, and managing of the clouds; *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them*, Job xxvi. 8. amazing it is, that such a body of water should be wrapped up in so thin a garment as a cloud, which is only thickened air; and that the cloud should not rent and burst with their weight; and that these should not fall at once, in the vast quantity of which they are, and thus wash away the increase of the earth, and destroy men and cattle on it. But God, in his infinite wisdom and providence, causes them to fall in gentle showers, and in small drops, as if they passed through a sieve, and so refresh and make the earth fruitful, Elihu asks Job, *Can any understand the spreadings of the clouds?* how from a small appearance, like that of a man's hand, on a sudden they spread themselves all over the heavens; as in the times of Ahab, and again he asks, *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wonderous work of him which is perfect in knowledge?* Job xxxvii. 16. how such vast bodies, holding such large quantities of water, are poized in the air, without turning aside, or falling at once; but move on evenly from place to place, and fall on those parts wherein providence they are directed.

3. The winds are also at the disposal of providence: God has his treasures of them, and he brings them out from thence when he pleases, and holds them in his fists, restrains them, or lets them loose at his pleasure; he commands and raises the stormy wind, and bids it blow, and it obeys his orders, and fulfils his word; and he makes a weight for it, and causes it to subside, Psal. cxxxv. 7. And as all this is the work of providence, and which God only can do, so it is a clear proof of the Deity of our Lord: who, when he rebuked the winds and sea, there was a calm, when before there was a violent tempest: hence the men in the ship with him said, What manner of man is this, that the winds and the sea obey him? Hail is at the command of God, and which he sometimes in providence makes use of to the hurt and destruction of wicked men, as the Egyptians and Canaanites, as before observed, and will be one of the plagues on the antichristian states, Rev. xvi. 21. On the other hand, in a way of mercy, God sends dew, and rain, and snow upon the earth, to water it, and make it fruitful; and which are what none of the vanities of the Gentiles can give, rain is a wonderful blessing of providence, and falls by divine direction, sometimes on one part of the earth, and sometimes on another, as

God pleases to dispose of it, Amos iv. 7, 8. Thunder and lightening are of God; lightening is directed by him, and it runs from one end of the heavens to the other, and very many and wonderful are the effects of it, thunder is the voice of God; *Canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* Job xl. 9. *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth*; and strange effects are produced by it, Psal. xxix. 3—9. God sometimes causes this his voice to be heard, to awaken and terrify secure sinners and atheistical persons, and let them know there is a God in the heavens that takes notice of them, and to whom they are accountable; and sometimes God in his providence does execution upon them this way; thus with a great thunder the Lord discomfited the army of the Philistines, in the days of Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 10.

4. The providence of God is not only concerned with things inanimate in the heavens, but also in the earth, the several metals and minerals there; such as gold, silver, brass, iron, &c. *There is a vein for silver, and a place for gold ——iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stones,* Job xxviii. 1, 2. God has made a provision of these metals for the use of men, and bestows them on them in providence; *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord,* Hag. ii. 8. and he gives them to whom he pleases, and as much of them as seems meet to him; and directs men how to employ them, and improve them in trade and commerce, and in several arts and manufactories.

5. The sea, as well as all that are therein, is at his command; this unruly and unwieldy creature is managed by him at his pleasure, as easily as an infant by its nurse; he puts on its garment, wraps it in a swaddling-band; he has broke up its decreed place for it, and has set bars, and doors, and bounds unto it, to stop and stay its proud waves from proceeding any farther; he has placed that small creature the sand for a boundary of it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, as it were in scorn and contempt of this their boundary; yet notwithstanding their haughty airs, they cannot prevail and pass over, Jer. v. 22.

II. Animate creatures, or creatures with life; though they have only either a vegetative life, or a sensitive, animal life, are under the care of divine providence; vegetables, herbs, plants, and trees, grass for cattle, and herb for the service of man; and of great use, profit, and advantage, are they to both; when they are withered, or they do not spring up, not only the *beasts groan, the herds of cattle are perplexed, and the flocks of sheep are made desolate, because they have no pasture,* Joel i. 18. but men sensibly feel the loss of them; for God sometimes in providence turns *a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein,* Psal. cvii. 34. As every spire of grass proclaims a God, so it also declares a providence, and instructs men to trust therein; *Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin*; but being raised by providence, they thrive, and are clothed with beauty and glory, which Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed with: *Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven,* &c. Matt. vi. 28—30. Other creatures that live a sensitive, animal life, yet irrational, are cared for in providence; *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry*, Psal. cxlvii. 9. All the creatures look up unto him, wait upon him, and he gives them their meat in due season; the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, God knows them all, and provides for them, and takes care of them, and preserves them; not a sparrow fails to the ground without him, without his knowledge, will, and providence; and the doctrine of providence, and trust in it, are to be learned from these creatures; *Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them*, Matt. vi. 26. The heathens acknowledge the providence of God, as regarding the most mean and minute. Plato says[a], that things small and great are not neglected by God, neither through ignorance nor sloth; and that such an imagination is false and wicked. Indeed, some are for exempting creatures mean and small, as well as trivial things, from the providence of God, being of the Stoics mind, who said[b], *Dii magna curant, parva negligunt*; the gods take care of great things, but neglect small ones: but what is more mean and worthless than a sparrow? and yet under the care of the providence of God; and what smaller than some insects, as flies, &c. and yet as the wisdom and power of God are seen in creating them, they are no less displayed in the use he makes of them, in doing great things by them; as in the plagues of Egypt, and if they are not unworthy of his creation, they cannot be unworthy of his providence.

III. Rational creatures, angels and men, are more especially the objects of divine providence. Angels good and bad. Good angels are not only upheld in their beings by God, but are directed by his providence, and ordered by his will here and there; and he does according to his will among them, even in the armies of the heavens, which they are, Dan. iv. 35. He orders them to do his pleasure in the several parts of the world, gives them a charge over his people, to keep and guard them in all their ways. Christ says, he could have asked twelve legions of them from his Father, and have had them. But of the offices and employment of good angels we have treated elsewhere. Evil angels are under the restraints and checks of providence; they are held in the chains of it; nor can they go any where, nor any farther, nor do any thing but what they have leave for; as the cases of Job, and of the man possessed of a legion, and of Peter, Job i. 11, 12. Mark v. 10—13. Luke xxii. 31. but of the providence of God, respecting angels in their first estate, and at their fall, I shall treat more particularly hereafter; and proceed to consider the providence of God concerning men, men in general, and the people of God in particular.

Men in general. As all men have their life and breath, and all things, from God; they live, and move, and have their being in him; he looks down from heaven, and beholds them all, takes care of them, and provides for them, and preserves them; Thou preservest man and beast; as all sorts of beasts, so the whole of mankind, the providence of God is concerned in the introduction of every man into being, and attends him in every stage and step of life, even unto death.

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[a] De Legibus, l. 10. p. 956. [b] Balbus apud Ciceron. de Natura Deorum, l. 2. in fine.

1. It is concerned in the production of them into being; it was the will of God, declared from the beginning, that there should be a propagation of the human species; God made man, male and female, for that purpose, joined them together in marriage, and enjoined them the first law of nature; *Increase and multiply*; and blessed this ordinance and institution of his to the peopleing of the old world; and when that was overrun with wickedness, and destroyed by him for it with a flood, he by his providence preserved eight persons in an ark; and renewed the original law, *increase and multiply*; and by them repeopled the whole earth; and though ever since one generation of men has been going off by death, yet another generation comes and succeeds by birth; so it has been, is, and will be to the end of the world. To be a little more particular; the providence of God is concerned in the birth of every man, with respect to time when, place where, and persons of whom he is born; for as each of these are fixed in the purposes of God, the providence of God exactly executes those purposes, Eccles. iii. 1, 2. Acts xvii. 26. Gen. xxxiii. 5. and xlviii. 9. the conception of man in the womb, the formation of every member of the body in the curious and wonderful manner in which they are wrought, and the whole progress thereof, are under the direction of providence, and owing to it, Psal. cxxxix. 14—16. the production of the soul in, and the union of it to the embryo, when in a fit and proper state to receive it, whereby it is quickened, are performed by the same hand, Zech. xii. 1. and when all things are ripe for the birth, God, by his power and providence, takes it out of the womb, and brings it forth into the world; for to him is this act ascribed, rather than to the midwife. Job, in his distress complains of it, and wishes it had not been; but the Psalmist blesses and adores the providence of God for it, Job x. 18. Psal. xxii. 8, 9. and how wonderful does the providence of God appear in the case of a new-born infant, that when it cannot help itself, nor tell its wants, care is taken that such things should be done for it in that instant which are necessary, Ezek. xvi. 4. and that as it has been marvellously fed and nourished, in the dark cell of nature, as soon as it is brought to the light, the mother's breasts are filled with milk; to which it has a natural desire; and her heart is filled with tenderness to it, to do all that is in her power for it, and rather suffer herself than that should want; this is all owing to divine providence.

2. The providence of God attends men in every stage of life into which they come, and in every step in it, as in the first moment of their birth, so throughout their infancy; providing things necessary for them, and preserving them from many dangers the infant-state is exposed unto: it appears in their education, the foundation of which is laid in childhood; some have a better education than others, by which their tender minds are opened and improved; and some have greater capacities to receive and take in the instructions given them; but all have either more or less to fit them for the stations in life which are de-

signed for them; all that come into the world are enlightened with the light of nature and reason; there is a rational spirit in every man; and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding in natural things, and teaches him, and makes him wiser than the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the heaven; whereby he is qualified, in a course of time, for such employments in life he is designed unto, Job xxxii. 8. and xxxv. 11. and when fit for business, the providence of God is greatly seen in directing to such callings, occupations, and stations in life they are fittest for; and it is easily discerned in giving to each an inclination to such and such services, some to one, and some to another; some choose an employment on the sea, others on land; some take to agriculture, or husbandry, in one branch of it or another; some to mechanic trades and manufactories, of different sorts: in all which the providence of God greatly appears; for as it is in the natural body, *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?* So it is in the body politic, if all choose and were concerned in one sort of business and employment, that would soon be overdone, and the rest neglected; the consequence of which would be distress and confusion. But God, in his providence, has ordered every man's calling for his own particular good, and the good of the public; therefore, *let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called*, 1 Cor. vii. 20, 24, and xii. 17. the places of abode where every man is settled to do the business of his calling, are under the direction of the providence of God, who has *determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of men's habitation.* God not only at the peopleing of the world, divided to the nations their inheritance, and set the bounds of the people; particularly after the flood disposed of the sons of Noah, and their posterity, some in one part of the world, and some in another; but he has appointed to every man the place of his settlement, and in his providence directs unto it, Deut. xxxii. 8. Acts xvii. 26. The marriage-state of life, into which most men enter, is too important an affair to escape the providence of God; there is more truth in that common saying, than many are aware of, that marriages are made in heaven; that is, they are appointed of God, and brought about in providence; and very often in a most remarkable manner; instances of this may be observed in the direction of Abraham's servant sent to take a wife for Isaac; and in the case of Boaz and Ruth, Gen. xxiv. 14—27. Ruth iv. 13, 14. When persons are got into the world, and set up in business in it, their success therein depends on the providence of God, which is different, to some greater, to others less; some rise early, and sit up late, and it is as much as they can do to live; others, through the blessing of God on their diligence and industry, become rich; which is not to be ascribed to chance and fortune, but to divine providence, Psal. cxxvii. 2. Prov. x. 4, 22. for poverty and riches are both in the hand of God, and he disposes of them at his pleasure; *The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all*, both rich and poor; not the maker of them as men, though he is, which is an observation any one could make, as well as the wise man; but the maker of them both as rich and poor; this is an observation worthy of the wisest of men; for *the Lord maketh poor and maketh rich.* Agur was sensible of this, and therefore desires that God would give him neither poverty nor riches, Prov. xxx. 8. All afflictions, of whatsoever sort, are under the direction of providence; they do not spring out of the ground, or come by chance, but by the appointment of God; and are over-ruled, in providence, to answer some ends or other; be they personal or family, or crosses, losses, and disappointments in trade and business, they are all sent, and set and bounded by the providence of God; prosperity and adversity are set by him, the one against the other; so that men can find nothing after him, Job v. 6. and xxiii. 14. Eccles. vii. 14. All diseases of bodies are the servants of God, are at his beck and command, and sent here and there to do his pleasure; he says to one, go, and it goes, and to another, come, and it comes; he sends them on, and calls them off as he pleases; he chastens with sore pain, consumes their flesh, weakens their strength in the way, and brings near to the grave; These things worketh God, in his providence, oftentimes with men. And as the providence of God attends men in their infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood, and in all circumstances relative to them, in the course of these, so in old age; he that has been the guide of their youth, and conducted them in every part of life, is the staff of old age, and will not then cast off, leave nor forsake; he carries from the womb even to old age and hoary hairs, Psal. lxxi. 9, 18. The term of life, as it is fixed by God, it is finished by providence, exactly in the manner, and at the time appointed; some die a violent, and others, for the most part, a natural death; some in the prime of life, others in old age; some suddenly, and in their full strength, whilst others drag on a tedious life, and consume and pine away gradually; but all come by the appointed means, and in the appointed manner, and at the appointed time, under the direction of providence, Eccles. iii. 2. Nor can the term of life be protracted beyond the bounds of days, months, and years which God has fixed; nor be shortened, as not to be reached unto, Job xiv. 5. Nor are the fifteen years added to Hezekiah's days, an objection to this; since that addition was not to the days which God had appointed he should live, but to his own, which he thought were at an end, when he had the sentence that he should die, being stricken with a mortal disease, which none but God could cure him of: nor what is said of some, that they die before their time, Eccles. vii. 17. since that does not respect God's time but their own time; what, according to the course of nature, humanly speaking, they might have lived to; and which both they and their friends might expect they would; the passage respects such who by capital crimes fall under the notice and vengeance of the civil magistrates, and so come to what is usually stiled an untimely end. And when some are said not to live out half their days; these live out all the days they are designed in providence to live; and yet live but half of those which, according to their own, and the expectation of their friends, and according to the common term of life, threescore years and ten, it might be supposed they would have lived; so that if a person dies under five and thirty years of age, he may be said to live not half the days of man, though he has lived all the days that were allotted to him in providence.

There is a special providence, which is concerned with the people of God in particular; God is *the Saviour of all men,* in a providential way, but *specially of those that believe,* 1 Tim. iv. 10. not only is the eye of love, grace and mercy, on those that fear the Lord, but his eye of providence. The providence of God is signified by seven eyes, that run to and fro through the earth, o denote the perfection and extensiveness of it; and it takes this course, particularly that God may *shew himself strong on the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him,* Psal. xxxiii. 18. Many are the instances on divine record, of the special providence of God respecting the saints; as Abraham and Sarah, who being called from their native country to a strange land, through which hey travelled with safety, though the Canaanite was in it; and where eminenty preserved both in Egypt and Gerar; Abraham, when his life, as he supposed, was in danger, and Sarah, when her chastity was ready to be violated. saac, in obedience to the divine command, Abraham took, and was about to acrifice, all things being ready for that purpose, and his hand stretched out to give the fatal blow; when he was restrained from it by a voice from heaven, and was directed to a ram caught in a thicket, to offer in his room; and this providence being at mount Moriah, occasioned a proverb in future ages, for he encouragement of faith in times of distress; *In the mount of the Lord it shall e seen,* Gen. xxii. Jacob is another instance of the special care of divine providence, in directing him to flee from the wrath of his Brother, who inended to kill him; and in preserving him in his journey, and bringing him safe o Laban's family; in prospering him in it, and in securing him from his fury, when he departed from him; in guarding him with an host of angels when his brother Esau came out to meet him; all which, and other providences, were emarked by him; which occurred in the way in which he was led by his God, who fed him, and protected him all his days. Joseph, whose party-coloured coat was an emblem of the various providences of his life, is a remarkable intance of this kind; in being preserved from the designs of his brethren upon his ife; in his being sold and carried into Egygt; in the disposal of him there, and he favour he had both in Potiphar's family, and in the prison into which he was cast by him; in interpreting the dreams of two of Pharaoh's servants, which was the means of his being brought from thence into Pharaoh's presence and court; where he was advanced to the highest honour and office, next the king, and was of eminent use to the whole nation, and to his father's family. To observe no more, David was also remarkably the care of providence. Samuel was directed by the providence of God to anoint him king, when all his brehren, elder than he, were passed by; and by the same providence he was brought to Saul's court, and more than once was he eminently preserved from his fury; so when he threw a javelin at him, and sent messengers to beset his house, and take him; and when he pursued him in various places, and particularly when he lay with his army on one side of the mountain where David and his men were, and was just about to surround him, but was called off by a messenger that acquainted him the Philistines had invaded the land: With many other signal appearances of divine providence in his favour, both in his exile and in his wars. But besides those instances, and many others, there is a special providence that attends all the people of God.

1. Before conversion, even as soon as they are born; this is what the apostle seems to intend in Gal. i. 15. With respect to himself: When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb; which cannot be understood of the separation of him in election, which was done earlier than this, even in eternity; nor of his separation from others in effectual vocation, for that was not done so early; but of his being taken under the care of divine providence in a distinguished manner, as soon as he was taken out of his mother's womb; God's eye was upon him all along, from thence to the time of his conversion, waiting to be gracious to him; see Acts vii. 58. Though it is not the only, nor the principal thing, that may be intended in 2 Tim. i. 9. yet it seems to be part of the sense of it, and not to be excluded from it: Who hath saved us, and called us; since the people of God are often saved from many imminent dangers, to which their lives are exposed before conversion; and so are saved before called, and saved to be called. Many of them are greatly preserved from the grosser sins of life before conversion, though this is not the case of all; and many are blessed with a religious education, which is a means of their preservation from scandalous sins; though this also every one has not; yet where it is, it is a providential favour.

2. At conversion; as effectual calling itself is according to the purpose of God, as to time, place, and means; so the providence of God is concerned in the bringing of it about agreeable thereunto; there is a time fixed for it, called the time of life, and the time of love; because there is then the first appearance of both; this is sometimes in the earlier, and sometimes in the latter part of life, and is not restrained to any, but is always at the time appointed by God, and then it is providentially brought about; the time being come for the conversion of the woman of Samaria, and for the call of Zaccheus, Christ must needs go through Samaria and Jericho, when it does not appear that he had any reason to go through either, but on those accounts. The place where conversion shall be made is also fixed, Acts xviii. 10. wherefore the providence of God is often remarkably concerned either in bringing the gospel to such places, as it was brought to Philippi, for the sake of the conversion of Lydia and her houshold, and of the jailor and his, Acts xvi. 6, &c. or in bringing persons to the places where the gospel is, and casting them under the sound of it. Very remarkably and uncommon was the conversion of Onesimus, a fugitive servant, who ran away from his master, was taken up and cast into

e same prison where the apostle Paul was, by whom he was begotten in hi
onds, through the ministry of the gospel to him, Philem. 10. And as the
ospel is the ordinary means of conversion, how providentially are some per-
ons brought under it, and converted by it, led by curiosity to hear it, or with
malignant spirit to scoff at it, oppose and persecute it; and ministers, how
rovidentially are they directed to insist on such a subject, to say such things,
nd drop such expressions, and which, perhaps, they thought not of before;
hich, accompanied with a divine power, issue in conversion. Thus Austin
sing his subject, and digressing from it, fell upon the error of the Manichees,
hich proved the conversion of a great man of that heresy; and at most, minis-
rs draw the bow at a venture; it is divine providence, in a gracious manner,
rects the arrow of the word to the sinner's heart, where, through the power
f divine grace, it does execution.

3. After conversion the providence of God appears, as well as before, in
reserving his people from many evils and dangers; angels are ministering
irits to them, have the charge of them, encompass about them, and protect
em, Psal. xci. 11. in providing for their temporal good, so that they shall want
o good thing fitting and convenient for them; rather than they shall suffer
ant God will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the
allies. In directing them in all their ways; to take such steps as will be most
r their good and the glory of God, Psal. xxxvii. 23. and in delivering them
ut of their afflictions, and causing all things to work together for their good;
nd in being their God and guide even unto death, Rom. viii. 28.

IV. The providence of God is concerned in all actions; in every thing that
done in the world, from the beginning to the end of it. God is a *God of
nowledge, and by him actions are weighed*, 1. Sam. ii. 3. not only are they
nown, considered and examined by him, but he has some way or other, or in
ome sense or another, a concern in them; all action is from motion, and all
notion comes originally from the first Mover, who is God, *in whom we live,
nd move, and have our being*, Acts xvii. 28.

1. All natural actions, which are common or peculiar to every creature, as
lying to the fowls of the air, swimming to fishes, walking to men and beasts;
ll muscular motion is of God; and is continued by his providence; by which
ve can move from place to place, rise, walk, run, &c. eat and drink, and do
very action, and the several businesses of life.

2. All necessary actions; such as either arise from the necessity of nature, or
re so by the ordination and appointment of God. Some are so by the necessity
f nature; as waters naturally and necessarily descend and flow; and fire natur-
lly and necessarily burns what is combustible, when put to it; and heavy
hings descend, and light things ascend; they necessarily move and act accord-
ng to their nature, which is preserved in them by the providence of
God; and that they are under the direction of providence, is clear, because

they are sometimes controuled by it: so the waters rose up and stood on an heap in the Red sea, and the river of Jordan, and made dry land for the Israelites to pass through. The nature of fire was so restrained in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, that it did not so much as singe nor scent the cloaths of the three companions of Daniel, cast into it. There are other things that are necessary by the appointment of God, or must be, because he has appointed them; and, indeed, every thing is necessary in this sense, because he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; so for instance, the sufferings of Christ being by the determinate counsel of God, were necessary; hence those phrases, ought not Christ to suffer; the Son of man must suffer many things; so likewise offences must come, and heresies must be; they were necessary, by a necessity of immutability; that is, they must and do unchangeably come to pass in providence; but not by a necessity of coaction, or force, on those that are the authors of them, who do what they do most freely: as the crucifiers of Christ; men could not act more freely than they did; and as those by whom offences come, they give them freely, and are pleased when they are taken. Heretics form their corrupt schemes of doctrine with their whole hearts and will, and freely spread them; so that the divine determination, and providential bringing about of necessary actions, are consistent with the liberty of man's will. Hence,

3. All free and voluntary actions, which depend upon the free will of man are under the direction of the providence of God. The thoughts, purposes, schemes and determinations of the will of men, than which nothing is more free; yet these are under the influence of divine providence; A man's heart deviseth his way; forms schemes, which he purposes to execute: settles the method of the execution of them, according to his will; and chooses the way he proposes to walk in; But the Lord directeth his steps, and guides him in providence to take a quite different course; The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue are from the Lord; the thoughts of the heart, by which a man is prepared to speak his mind, are under a divine influence; as free as thought is, it is not exempt from the providence of God, which both directs and overrules it; and the answer the tongue is thereby prepared to give, is under the same influence and restraint; Balaam would willingly have given an answer to the wishes of Balak, in order to have got his money, but could not: when he had devised what to say, and was just ready to open his mouth to curse Israel, God put another word into his mouth; and instead of cursing, he blessed Israel. What more free and arbitrary than the heart, mind, and will of a sovereign despotic prince; yet the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will; as resolute and determined as it may be, it is in the hand of God; and it is in his power to turn it as easily as canals of water may be cut by a gardener to water his garden; or as the river Euphrates was cut by Cyrus, and its course diverted, and its waters drained; so that he could march his army into the midst of Babylon, through which it ran. So the cabinet-councils of princes in which they consult, debate, and

speak their minds freely, are all overruled by the providence of God, to answer his own purposes;

4. All contingent actions, or such as are called chance-matters, these fall under the divine providence. What may seem more a contingency, or matter of chance, than the shooting of a bird flying, and fetching it to the ground? when the bow is drawn, or the piece presented and levelled, how uncertain is it whether it hits the bird or no? And yet *One sparrow shall not fall on the ground*, that is, be shot and drop on the ground, *without your Father*; without his knowledge, will, and providence, Matt. x. 29. and what is more contingent than the killing of a man unawares, as it is described, Deut. xix. 4, 5. and yet the providence of God is so far concerned in such an affair, that God is said to deliver such a man into the hand of his neighbour, Exod. xxi. 13. What we call accidental death, is providential: what can be thought more a chance-matter than the casting of a lot, how it will issue? and yet the issue, which is of God, is certain; *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 33. The first lot mentioned in scripture is that which was cast on the account of Achan, who had stolen a Babylonish garment, and a wedge of Gold; to find out which, Joshua had recourse to a lot; this was cast first for the tribe the guilty person belonged to, and it fell on the tribe of Judah; then for the family of it, and it fell on the family of the Zarhites; and next for the houshold, and it fell upon the houshold of Zabdi; and then for the person, and it fell upon Achan: and in the whole process, how remarkable is the providence of God, which directed to the tribe, to the family, to the houshold, and to the guilty person; for that he was so, is certain from his own confession, Josh. vii. 16—20. The next lot was that which was cast for the division of the land of Canaan to the tribes of Israel; and which fell exactly agreeable to the prophecies of Jacob and Moses: thus for instance, it is suggested in both of them, that the tribe of Zebulun should have its situation by the sea, Gen. xlix. 13. Deut. xxxiii. 19. and by lot this situation was assigned unto it, Josh. xix. 11. The third lot we read of was that cast by Saul, to find out the person that had sinned, on whose account no answer was returned by the Lord to an enquiry made; and Saul desired a perfect lot might be given between the people, and him and Jonathan; it was cast, and the people escaped; it was cast again, and it fell on Jonathan, who had tasted honey that day, contrary to the charge and oath of Saul, 1 Sam. xiv. 40—43. Once more, Jonah fleeing from the presence of the Lord, took shipping at Joppa, for Tarshish, when a tempest arose and endangered the ship, and frighted the mariners, who supposed it was for some evil done by some among them, and therefore cast lots to find out the person, and the lot fell on Jonah. Now how careful and just was this disposition made in providence, that it might not fall upon any of the innocent mariners, but upon the guilty person; and for whom God in his providence had provided a fish to swallow him, when cast into the sea, Jonah i. 7—17.

v. All actions and things done in the world and among men, whether good or evil, are under the direction of providence; or that is some way or other concerned in them.

Good actions. Those are of God, the fountain of all goodness; there is no good thing in fallen man naturally, and therefore no good thing comes out of him, nor is any good thing done by him; and without the grace of God, he can do nothing of that kind; neither think a good thought, nor do a good action, an action that is spiritually good; in this God is concerned; this is one branch of his gracious dealings in providence with men: and he does not only uphold them in their beings, whilst they are doing good; for this he does to wicked men, whilst they are doing evil things; nor does he only give them a law, which shews them that which is good, what is to be done, and what to be avoided, and what is the perfect and acceptable will of God; to love God and their neighbour; to do nothing injurious to the glory of the one, and the good of the other: nor does he barely make use of moral suasion by his ministers, to persuade with arguments taken from fear or love, from loss or profit, to avoid evil and do good, 2 Cor. v. 11. But God works efficaciously in the hearts to attend to the word spoken to them; he bends their wills, and inclines their hearts to that which is good, and gives them power and grace to effect it; he circumcises their hearts to love him, the Lord their God; he creates them anew in Christ, that they may be capable of performing good works; for though without him they can do nothing, yet through him strengthening them, they can do all things; he puts his Spirit within them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments and do them. But of this more, when we come to treat of the doctrine of efficacious Grace.

There are many evil things done in the world, in which the providence of God is concerned; and these are of two sorts, the evil of calamities, distress and afflictions, and the evil of sin.

1. The evils of calamities, &c. and these are either more public or more private. More public; such are the calamities and distresses on nations and kingdoms, and bodies of men, and which are never without the providence of God; *I make peace and create evil*; *I the Lord do all these things*, Isai. xlv. 7. when peace obtains and continues in state and kingdoms, it is God that makes peace in their borders; this is a blessing of his providence; and the evil which is set in contrast with it, said to be of his creating, is war, and this and all the calamities and distress that attend and follow it, are by the providence of God. In this sense are we to understand the prophets when he says, *Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos iii. 6. he means any public calamity, affliction and distress; even cities themselves come to destruction and their memorial perishes with them: where is now Thebes with its hundred gates, and Babylon with its broad walls, and the famous Persepolis, and Jerusalem the joy of the whole earth? it cannot be thought that these cities came to destruction without the concern of providence therein: yea, where are the famous monarchies which made such a figure in the world, the Babylonian,

Persian, Grecian and Roman, of which the latter only has a name, and that is all? the fall of these, according to divine prediction, has been accomplished by divine providence. Under this head may be observed the judgments of God in the world, as the sword, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, &c. when the sword is drawn, it is God that gives it a charge, and appoints it against such a state and kingdom; and it cannot be sheathed again, and be at rest and quiet, until he gives a counter order in providence, Jer. xlvii. 6, 7. famine is one of God's arrows shot out of the bow of providence; wherever it is, it is of his calling for and sending, Amos iv. 6. Hag. i. 11. and pestilence is another of his arrows, an arrow which flies by day and walks in darkness, and wastes at noon-day by his order; concerning which he says, *I will send* or *I have sent* the pestilence among them, Jer. xxix. 17. Amos iv. 10. and who has foretold there shall be earthquakes in divers places, as have been in our times as well as others, and cannot be thought to be without the providence of God, Matt. xxiv. 7. There are other calamities and afflictions which are of a more private nature, and are either inflicted on wicked men by way of punishment for sin; *Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?* Lam. iii. 39. or they are inflicted on good men in love, and as fatherly corrections and chastizements; *for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth*, Heb. xii. 6. the affliction of good men is made an objection, though not justly, against the providence of God: this was the grand objection of Epicurus and his followers to divine providence, the only persons among the heathens that objected to it; because they observed that wicked men for the most part prosperous, and good men, or virtuous men, as they called them, were generally afflicted and distressed; and therefore they could not believe that God concerned himself with human affairs; and this has been a stumbling to good men, which they know not how well to reconcile to the justice of God, as it was to Asaph and Jeremiah, Psal. lxxiii. 2--14. Jer. xii. 1, 2. But it should be observed, that wicked men, though they prosper and abound in riches, and are not seemingly in trouble as other men, yet they are not so happy as they may be thought to be; for as our Lord says, *A man's life*, that is, the happiness of it, *consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth*, Luke xii. 15. Some have much, and have not a power to make use of it, either for their own comfort or the good of others; and where is the difference, than between having and not having it? others on the contrary are profuse and extravagant, and live very luxurious and debauched lives, and bring upon themselves painful or nauseous diseases, and distress of mind: so that they have neither ease of body nor peace of conscience, but racking pain and dreadful remorses; some, their abundance will not suffer them to sleep, either through fear of losing what they have by thieves, &c. or through care, contriving schemes to increase it; and some, envy seizes them and gnaws upon them, and they cannot enjoy themselves because a neighbour exceeds them in grandeur and wealth, It should be also observed that a good man, though afflicted, is not so unhappy as is imagined; he has more peace, satisfaction and contentment in what he has, though mean and little, than the wicked rich man in all his abundance; see Psal. xxxvii. 16. Prov. xv. 16, 17. besides, the good man, though poor in one sense, he is rich in a better; and is not only heir of a kingdom, but is possessed of one which cannot be moved, the kingdom of grace; he is possessed of the riches of grace, and is entitled to the riches of glory; and in the mean while has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, communion with God, and joy and peace unspeakable, which none can take away; and even his very afflictions work together for his good, temporal, spiritual and eternal; and he has the presence of God, and a rich experience of his grace in them; so that he has reason to count it all joy when he falls into temptations, that is, into afflictions: for though they are not in themselves joyous but grievous, yet they yield to them to whom they are sanctified the peaceable fruits of righteousness; so that the balance is now on the afflicted good man's side. Hereafter, in a future state, this difficulty will be quite removed, and entirely vanish, when the wicked rich man, that was clothed in purple and fared sumptuously every day, and had his good things here, will have his evil things; and Lazarus, the afflicted man, that was cloathed with rags, and covered with ulcers, and had his evil things, will now have his good things; the one will be tormented, and the other comforted; the wicked will go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal; and then justice will shine in its true lustre and glory.

2. There are the evils of fault, or sinful actions, from which the providence of God is not to be excluded. This is the greatest difficulty to be met with in the article of providence, how it should have a concern with sinful actions, or with actions to which sin is annexed, as some choose to express themselves. There are two things to be set down for certain and eternal truths, whether we are capable of reconciling them to our own satisfaction and that of others, or no; the one is, that God is not and cannot be the author of sin; the other is, that the providence of God has a concern with and in all sinful actions in some sense or another: that God is not the author of sin is most certain, there is nothing sinful in his nature[e]; Plato says of good things there is no other cause but of evil things we must seek for any other cause but God: he is without iniquity, is of unspotted purity and holiness; there is nothing but good in him, and therefore nothing sinful can come from him, nor be done by him; he takes no pleasure in sin, nor in those that do it, which the authors of sin do; he cannot look upon it with approbation and delight, it is abominable and hateful to him; for he has not only forbidden it by his law, but is the avenger of it; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish come from him on every soul that does evil; wherefore *let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God*, James i. 13. and on the other hand, to exclude the providence of God from all concern in the sinful actions of men, is contrary to the independency of God, in whom all live and move and have their being, and of whom, through whom,

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[e] ο μεν Θεος (κακων) ουκ αιτιος, επειδη ο Θεος αγαθος, Sallust. de Diis, c. 12.

and to whom all things are: creatures depend upon God, as in their being so in their operation, or they would be in action independent of him, and so there would be other independents besides him: moreover to exempt the providence of God from all concern in all sinful action, or in actions to which sin is annexed, would be to banish providence, in a good measure, out of the world; for, comparatively speaking, what is done in the world but what is sinful? for these are the all, or the chief things in the world; *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,* 1 John ii. 16. Let the following things be observed for the settleing of this point, and the removing of the above difficulty,—1. God supports men in their being, whilst they are sinning. This is certain; he upholds them in life, his visitation preserves their spirits; was he to withdraw his power and providence from them, they would cease to be, and become incapable of action; but this he does not; he could have struck Ananias and Sapphira dead, before they committed the sin they did, and so have prevented it; but he did not; but when they had committed it, then he did it.—2. God, in innumerable instances, does not hinder the commission of sin, when he could do it, if he would: that he can do it is certain, because he has done it; he withheld Abimelech from sinning against him, as he told him, Gen. xx. 6. and he that withheld Abimelech, could have withheld Adam, and any of his sons, from sinning, whom he has not. He restrained Laban from hurting Jacob, as Laban himself owned; and hindered Balaam from cursing Israel, which he would gladly have done. And so God could prevent the innumerable sins of men, which yet he does not. We, as creatures, are bound to hinder all the evil we can; but God is under no such obligation.—3. God permits sin to be done, or suffers it to be, in his providence. This is the language of scripture; *Who in time past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*; and these ways were sinful ones, Acts xiv. 16. And this permission is not a connivance at sin; nor a concession or grant of it; much less does it express any approbation of it: nor is it barely a leaving men to the liberty of their wills, to do as they please; as Moses suffered the Jews to put away their wives when they pleased; as though he was careless and indifferent about it: nor is it a mere naked permission, but a voluntary one, yea, an efficacious one; God's will is in it, and efficacy attends it.—4. God is represented as active in things relative to it; he not only suffers men to walk in their sinful ways, but *he gives them up to their own hearts' lusts; he gives them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; he sends them strong delusions, that they may believe a lie,* Psal. lxxxi. 12. Rom. i. 28. 2 Thess. ii. 11. Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, but God sent him thither; he bid Shimei curse David; he gave the evil spirit a commission to go forth and do what he proposed, to be a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets.—5. It will be proper to distinguish between an act, and the obliquity of it; every action, as an action, a natural one, is of God, the first Mover, in whom all move; the creature is dependent on God. as the Creator, in every action, as well as in his being; but the obliquity and irregularity of the action, as it swerves from the rule of God's law, is from man: this is sometimes illustrated by divines, in such an instance as this; a man that rides on a lame horse, he by whipping and spurring is the cause and occasion of his motion of going forward; but he is not the cause of his going lamely; that arises from a disorder in the creature itself: also the sun in the firmament, when it exhales a nauseous scent from a dunghill, it is the cause of the exhalation; but it is not the cause of the ill scent of it, that arises from the dunghill; the heat and force of the sun may be the occasion of the ill scent being drawn forth, but not of that itself. So, — 6. God in his providence may put in the way of persons things that are good in themselves; which may give an opportunity, and be the occasion of drawing out the corruptions of men's hearts; thus God in his providence directed Joseph to dream, and to tell his dreams; which drew upon him the envy of his brethren; and God put it into the heart of Jacob to send him to visit them in the fields, where they were feeding their flocks, which gave them an opportunity to form and execute evil against him. David was brought by providence into afflicted circumstances, which obliged him to flee, and pass by the way where Shimei lived; and which gave him an opportunity of doing that with his mouth, which very probably he had done in his heart before; and now it was, as it were, saying, Go curse David; the object was presented, and a fit opportunity in providence offered. There is sometimes a concurrence of things in providence, which in themselves are not sinful, yet are the occasion of sin; as in the affair of David and Bathsheba. Various things met together, which gave an opportunity, and were the occasion of committing sin, which David fell into, not being restrained by the grace of God; and to be preserved from opportunities, the occasion of sinning, is owing to the kind providence of God. Of this an heathen[d] was sensible, and therefore gave thanks to God, that when he had a disposition to sin, and should have committed it, had an occasion offered; yet, *θεων ευνοια*, by the good providence of God, no such occasion, from the concourse of things, did offer for his commission of it. God gives to some men wealth and riches, and these are the occasions of much sin to them. He gives a law, which forbids men to sin; but as the apostle says, *Sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*, Rom. vii. 8. the gospel also sent to men, is the occasion of stirring up the corruption of their nature, their pride and passion, to an opposition to it, and it becomes *the savour of death unto death* unto them, 2 Cor. ii. 16, &c. — 7. The concern of providence about sinful actions further appears in limiting and setting bounds; as to the waves of the sea, saying, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further. Thus Joseph's brethren would have run greater lengths in sin, had they not been restrained by the over-ruling providence of God; their first scheme was to put him to death; this was disconcerted by Reuben, who proposed putting

[d] Antoninus de Seipso, l. 1. s. 17.

him into a pit, and let him starve there; from this also they were diverted by a motion of Judah's, to take him from thence, and sell him to the Ishmaelites, who were coming that way. And though it is amazing to observe how much sin is committed in the world; yet considering the wretched depravity of human nature, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of the world, it is most amazing that no more is committed; which can only be ascribed to the restraining providence of God. — 8. God, in the affairs of providence, is to be considered as the Rector and Governor of the world, and the Judge of the whole earth; and in this branch of it, respecting sin, which he over-rules either for the punishment of those who commit it, or of others, or else for good; he sometimes punishes one sin with another. Plato says, a licence to sin, is the greatest punishment of sin. So disobedient Israel, because they would not hearken to the voice of God, and would have nothing to do with him, therefore he gave them up to their own heart's lust: and the heathens, because they liked not to retain God in their knowledge, therefore he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to commit things sinful; and because the followers of antichrist believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness; therefore he sent them strong delusions to believe a lie; and when he is said to harden the hearts, and blind the minds of men, it is done in a judicial way, by giving them up to greater hardness and blindness, for their wilful obstinacy, and affected ignorance, Psal. lxxxi. 11. Rom. i. 28. Thus God corrected David's sin with Bethsheba, by the incest of his son with his wives and concubines; and punished the hypocrisy and idolatry of Israel, through the pride, ambition, and cruelty of the Assyrian monarch, who was in his hand the rod of his anger, and the staff of his indignation. Sometimes God over-rules the sins of men for good; as the sin of Adam, for the glorifying of his perfections; the crucifixion of Christ for the salvation of men, and Joseph's being sold into Egypt, for the saving many persons alive, Gen. l. 20.

To conclude this article of providence; let it be observed, — 1 That all the providences of God are executed in the wisest manner; though they may not sometimes appear clear to us, and are inscrutable by us, and the causes and reasons of them not to be accounted for; yet even in such a view of them it should be said with the apostle, *O the depth of the riches*, &c. Rom. xi. 33. — 2. They are all done in the most holy and righteous manner; even such as are concerned about sin, are clear from any imputation of it; *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 17. — 3. They are executed with power irresistible; they are immutably performed, according to the unchangeable will of God, who works all things in providence after the counsel of his will; he does what he pleases; his counsel always stands; and he does all his pleasure. Wherefore, we should give to him the glory of all; observe with wonder and gratitude, the several steps of it respecting ourselves and others; and put our trust in him for things temporal and spiritual; and at all times cast our care upon him, who cares for us; seeing it is, and always will be, well with the righteous, in time and to all eternity.

OF THE CONFIRMATION OF THE ELECT, AND THE FALL OF THE NON-ELECT ANGELS.

HAVING considered at large the doctrines of creation and providence; I proceed to observe the first and principal events of providence relating to angels and men; and shall begin with the angels, the first of rational creatures that were created, and in whom the providence of God first took place; and whereas there was a distinction made between them, of elect and non-elect, as has been shewn in a preceding chapter. I shall take notice,

I. Of the confirmation of the elect angels; for as God chose them to a state of holiness and happiness; as soon as he created them, he confirmed them in that state; the providence of God was not only concerned in the preservation and sustentation of them in their being when created, but in the government of them, which are the two parts and branches of providence. Now the government of rational creatures is in a moral way, by giving a law to them, as the rule of their obedience; and such a law was given to angels, not of a positive nature, similar to what was given to Adam, forbidding him on pain of death, to eat of the fruit of a certain tree, as a trial of his obedience to the whole will of God; since we read of no such law, or like it, given to angels; nor a law in the form of a covenant, as to men, since the angels do not appear to have had any federal head, they standing singly and alone, and each for themselves; nor do we ever read of good angels keeping covenant; nor of the evil angels being charged with the breach of covenant; but it was a law implanted in their nature, concreated with them in like manner, as the law of nature was inscribed on Adam's heart, some remains of which are to be observed in his fallen posterity, and even among the Gentiles, Rom. ii. 14, 15. which is the same in substance with the moral law written; and with which angels are concerned, so far as the precepts of it are suitable to spiritual substances; for such of them, and so much of them, as relate to the body, and to corporeal actions, cannot agree with angels, who are incorporeal; as the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eigth commands: but such as relate to the fear and worship of God in a spiritual manner; to love to God, and love to fellow-creatures; these are binding on angels, and are perfectly obeyed by the good angels; and in this their perfect obedience and holiness, are they immutably confirmed, from the moment of their creation, for this their confirmation is not owing to any merits of theirs, through the good use of the freedom of their wills: some have fancied that they were first in a state of probation, and having stood some time in their obedience through the power of their free will, merited confirmation in that state from God; but a creature, even of the highest rank, can merit nothing at the hand of God; for *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?* Rom. xi. 35. The obedience of angels was due to God, and could merit nothing of him; nor was their confirmation owing to the merits of Christ. Christ is a Mediator between God and men; but not between God and angels; for though he may be allowed to be a medium of conservation of angels; yet not a Mediator of peace and reconciliation, which they needed not; he is not a Saviour and Redeemer of them; he merited nothing for them by his incarnation, sufferings, and death; these were not on their account; hence the angels say, *Unto* YOU *is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord,* Luke ii. 11. But their confirmation is owing to the free favour and good will of God choosing them to a state of holiness and happiness; and to his putting them under the care and charge of Christ, as the Head of all principality and power, 1 Tim. v. 21.

Now in this state of constant obedience and perfect holiness, they are immutably fixed by the will of God, and have from their creation continued in it, and ever will; as appears by their enjoyment of the presence of God perpetually; they always behold the face of God in heaven; they never left their habitation, but have always resided in heaven, where they were first placed; hence called the angels of heaven, and by their constant and perfect obedience to the will of God, and which is made the pattern of obedience to it in men; or we are directed to pray that it might be like it; *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*; that is, by the angels there, Matt. vi. 10. and by the consummate happiness of the saints at the resurrection being like to theirs; which supposes them to have continued in their original state, and that the saints will be like unto them, not only in the immortality of the bodies, but in perfect holiness and impeccability, as perfectly holy as they, and no more subject to sin than they are, Luke xx. 36. and by what is said of them with relation to the second coming of Christ, and their estate to all eternity; as that he shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels; shall come, not only in his own, and in his Father's glory, but in the glory of the holy angels; that he will employ them in gathering in the elect from the four parts of the world; that he will then confess the names of his faithful followers before them; and that the wicked will be tormented with fire and brimstone in their presence; the smoke of whose torment shall ascend for ever and ever; and consequently the holy angels will be free from that torment, and be happy for ever and ever;

II. The next remarkable event respecting angels, is the sin and fall of the non-elect angels. The heathens seem to have had some notion of the fall of the evil angels; for Plutarch speaks of dæmons or devils, as *θεηλατοι* and *ουρανοπετεις*, expelled by the gods, and fallen from heaven. The providence of God was equally concerned in the sustentation and conservation of them in their beings as of the elect angels; and in which they are and will be everlastingly preserved. The same law also for the government of them, and as a rule of obedience, was given to them; or otherwise they could not be chargeable with sin, as they are; they are called the angels that sinned. Now sin is a transgression of the law, where there is no law there is no transgression, 1 John iii. 4. These angels, in their original estate of creation, were in a capacity of obeying the law that was given them; their will was inclined to it; and the bias of their mind was towards it; for they were created holy, just, and good; the estate they are now in, is not that in which they were made; it is expresly said of them, that they *kept not their first estate*, and *abode not in the truth*, Jude 6. which supposes a better estate than what they are now in, and that they were originally in an estate of truth; that is, of integrity, righteousness, and holiness, though they did not abide in it, but fell from it; for being left to the freedom of their will, which was mutable, they sinned and fell, to which fall of theirs our Lord has respect, when he says, *I beheld Satan. as lightening, fall from heaven*, Luke x. 18. that is, suddenly, swiftly, and irresistibly, and which proves the existence of Christ before his incarnation; as that not only he was before Abraham, but before Adam; however, before the fall of Adam, for he was before the fall of the angels, he was present at it, and a witness of it. Now concerning this, the following things may be enquired into.

1. What was the sin of the angels, by which they fell? this cannot be said with precision, the scriptures being silent about it; yet it is generally supposed, and it is probable from the scriptures, that their sin was,

1. Pride; and which seems probable from 1 Tim. iii. 6. *Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil*; being guilty of the same sin, he is in danger of the same condemnation; and usually so it is, as the wise man observes, *pride goes before destruction*, Prov. xvi. 18. And so it might be before the fall of the angels, and be the cause of it. They might first begin with contemplating their own perfections and excellencies, which were very great; as their wisdom, knowledge, strength, &c. which might lead on to self-admiration, and issue in an over-weening opinion of themselves, so as to think more highly of themselves than they ought to have done; and to conclude, that creatures of such an high rank and class, as they were, ought not to be subject to a law, and therefore cast off the yoke of the law, and departed from their allegiance and obedience to God; hence one of the names of Satan is Belial, without a yoke; and the children of the devil are called sons of Belial; not being subject to the law of God, 2 Cor. vi. 15. upon which they seem to have affected deity; and having revolted from God, set up gods for themselves; and this may be thought to be confirmed from the manner in which they tempted our first parents to rebel against God; to do which they might hope to prevail with them, as it was the snare in which they themselves were taken; *Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*, Gen. iii. 5. as also by all the methods they have since taken to get themselves worshipped as Gods. Satan has usurped to himself the title of the God of this world; and very early did he introduce into the world the worship of idols, and the offering of sacrifice to them; which to do is no other than to sacrifice to devils, 2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 Cor. x. 20. yea, he has prevailed upon the poor Indians, both eastern and western, to wor-

ship him openly as a devil; and nothing can be a greater instance of his pride, arrogance, and impudence, than the proposal he made to Christ, to give him all the kingdoms of this world, if he would but fall down and worship him.

2. Some have thought that envy was the sin of the devils, by which they fell; led thereunto by a saying in the Apocryphal book of Wisdom, chap. ii. 24. *By the envy of the devil, death entered into the world:* and, indeed, envy and pride are inseparable; a proud man is always envious at others; he cannot bear that any should be above him, or even equal to him: the apostle joins these sins together, James iv. 5, 6. the angels might envy the superior power and excellencies of God himself, and therefore withdrew from him, as not bearing his superiority over them, envying that he should be above them, and higher than they; if there was any superior rank and class of angels above these, since some are called dominions, thrones, principalities and powers, they might be the object of their envy, and be displeased that they were not of the same, or of a superior class; however, it seems highly probable, that they envied the state of happiness of man, and therefore contrived his fall and ruin; as that he should be made after the image and likeness of God, which is never said of them, however like to God angels may be; and that man should be the Lord of the whole world, and all the creatures put in subjection to him; which they might think more properly belonged to them. And especially they might be envious at the Son of God, who they might understand, would in time assume human nature; though the end and design of it they might not know; and that in that nature he should sit at the right hand of God, which they were not admitted to; and that he should in that nature be the Head of all principality and power; and that angels, authorities and powers, should be subject to him in it. Now this they could not brook and bear, that the human nature should be advanced above that of theirs; and therefore broke away from God in envy, wrath, and malice; and hence there has been from the beginning, a continued enmity and opposition by the devil to Christ, the seed of the woman, that should bruise the head of the serpent; hence Satan always sought to oppose Christ in his person and offices, and to lead men into errors and mistakes about them; denying him in one or other of his natures, and depreciating him in his offices: and hence he set up antichrist, whose coming was after the working of Satan; and whose doctrines are doctrines of devils, and diametrically opposite to the glory of Christ.

3. Unbelief may also be taken into the account of the sin of the angels; they must disbelieve the eternal power of God, and his truth and faithfulness to his word, or they would not have dared to have sinned against him; and as the apostacy of our first parents began with that, and disregard unto, and a disbelief of the threatening word of God; it may be reasonably thought, that something of the same kind led on to the rebellion and fall of the angels; indeed, their sin seems to be a complication of iniquity, of pride, envy, and unbelief.

II. There are several questions commonly asked, relative to the fall of angels; to which a short answer may be returned; as,

1. How and by what means they came to fall? they had no tempter; there were no creatures in being capable of tempting them to sin; not irrational creatures, who could have no influence on them; and if man was then created, as it is a question whether he was or no; and if he was, he had no disposition to any thing of this kind; but on the other hand, his fall was through the temptation of an evil angel; there was none but God to tempt them, and he tempts none, neither angel nor man, and this indeed was the case, as before observed; the angels were left to there own free will, which was mutable, and so of themselves, and not through any temptation without them, sinned and fell; this is always spoken of as their own voluntary act and deed, without any force or persuasion used with them; they kept not their first estate, left their habitation, and abode not in the truth. It is very probable, that one of them, famous above the rest for his wisdom and strength, might begin the apostacy; and being in high esteem for his excellent qualifications, he gave the lead, and others followed his example; hence we read of the prince of devils, and of the prince of the power of the air, or of the posse of devils in it, and of the devil and his angels.

2. It is sometimes asked, When the angels fell? to which it may be answered, Not before the sixth day of the creation; as it is probable they might be created of the first day, when the heavens, their habitation was made, and light was formed; so they continued in their first estate, during the six days of the creation; for on the sixth day, when all the creatures were made; *God saw every every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good*; not only when made, but to this time had continued so. Now if the angels had sinned before, this could not have been said; and yet they must have fallen before Adam fell, because it was the serpent, or the devil in the serpent, either in a real one, or in the form of one, that beguiled Eve, and so was the cause and means of the fall of man. But however, certain it is, that the fall of the angels was very early; since the devil is called *a murderer from the beginning*, John viii. 44. a destroyer of mankind, either from the beginning of the world, that is, quickly after it was made; or from the beginning of his creation, not long after he began to be; or from the beginning of man's creation, who abode not long in this happy state, but soon fell from it, through the temptation of the devil.

3. This question is sometimes put, What number of the angels fell? This cannot be said with any precision; some have thought that as many fell as stood; grounding it on a passage in Ezek. xli. 18. where it is said, that on the wall of the temple were carved, with cherubim and palm-trees, a palm-tree between a cherub and a cherub; by cherubim they understand angels, and by palm-trees good men, said to flourish like the palm-tree; and who are supposed to fill up the places of fallen angels; and so conclude the same number fell as stood; but as such a sense of the text cannot easily be established, it is insufficient to build such a notion upon. Others have thought, that not so many fell as stood; since evil angels are never said to be innumerable, as the good angels are, Heb. xii. 22.

nd which they also gather from the words of Elisha to his servant; *Fear not;* *r they that be with us, are more than they that be with them*; and the servant's yes were presently opened, and he saw the *mountain full of horses and chariots f fire round about*; that is, angels in such forms, 2 Kings vi. 16, 17. but then e comparison is not between good and bad angels; but between the good anels and the Syrian host. Others fancy that a third part of the angels fell; this ey take from Rev. xii. 4. where the dragon is said to draw with *his tail the hird part of the stars of heaven*; but by the stars are not meant angels, but such vho bore the character of the ministers of the word, who in that book are caled stars, chap. i. 20. whom Satan, through his influence, prevailed upon to rop their character, and desert their office. However, it is certain, that not a ew of the angels, but many of them, fell; even as many as to form a kingom, with a prince at the head of it; and there were so many that possessed ne man, as to be called a legion, which consisted of some hundreds; for when he devil in him was asked his name, he answered, *My name is legion, for we re many*; yea, it seems there are various kinds and sorts of them; for when the isciples asked Christ the reason why they could not cast out a certain devil, ur Lord, among other things says, *this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting*, Matt. xii. 24, 26. and xvii. 19, 21.

III. The state and condition into which the angels were brought by sin, may next be considered. They were originally angels of light; full of light, knowledge, and understanding; but by sinning are become angels of darkness; and are called the power of darkness, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, blind, and blinding others, for whatever light and knowledge of natural things they retain, and which may be increased by long observation and experience; or whatever notional knowledge they have of evangelical truth, they have no spiritual and experimental knowledge; not the light of faith; nor rejoicing of hope; nor heat of love; no light of spiritual joy and gladness; but all black despair. They were once pure and holy creatures; but through their sin and fall, became impure and unholy; and therefore called unclean spirits; who delight in the impurities of sin; and take pleasure in drawing men into them, to the commission of them; the devil is called emphatically and eminently the wicked one, being notoriously and superlatively wicked; even wickedness itself, Matt. xiii. 38. 1 John v. 18. Once they were lovers of God, and of their fellow-creatures; but now at enmity to God, and all that is good; and spiteful and malicious to mankind. Satan is called emphatically the enemy, the enemy of God and of Christ, and of all good men; desirous of doing all the hurt and mischief to them he can, or gets leave to do; the case of Job abundandy proves this; whose substance, family, and health, by permission, he destroyed; and would have taken away his life, could he have obtained leave; and as also the possessions of men by him, in the times of Christ shew; to the torment of their bodies, and the distraction of their minds; and, indeed, he is always going about seeking whom he may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8. These fallen angels, who were once in a guiltless state, are now in the most desperate circumstances; are in chains of darkness and black despair, under irremissible guilt; no pardon for them, nor hope of it for evermore; which leads on to observe,

IV. Their punishment; and which is both of loss and sense; they have lost the favour and presence of God, and they sensibly feel his wrath and indignation on them. Sinning, they were hurled out of heaven, and deprived of their blissful state they left; being forced to leave their habitation there; nor will their place be any more found there; the apostle Peter says, they were *cast down to hell*, 2 Pet. ii. 4. but where that is, it is not easy to say; very probably upon their ejection out of heaven, they fell down into the air, since Satan is said to be the *prince of the power of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. Not that he has a power of moving the air, and of raising storms and tempests; but he is the ruler of the posse of devils that dwell in the air[k]; from whence by divine permission, they descend and patroll; and rove about the earth, in chains, limited and restrained for the punishment of wicked men, and for the trial of the graces of good men; but as yet they do not seem to have their full punishment inflicted on them; or are not yet in full torment; as may be learnt from their words to Christ; *Art thou come hither to torment us before our time?* Matt. viii. 29. and are said to be *reserved unto judgment, and unto the judgment of the great day*; when their full sentence will be pronounced upon them, and carried into execution, which they believe and tremble at, James ii. 19. and which punishment will be everlasting; there will be no end of it, no deliverance from it; it is called *everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*; the fire of divine wrath, which will never be quenched, but always burn without intermission, to all eternity; and a *lake of fire and brimstone*, where the devil, with the beast and false prophet, will be *tormented day and night for ever and ever*, Rev. xx. 10.

OF MAN IN A STATE OF INNOCENCE.

HAVING considered the first and principal events of providence respecting angels, I shall proceed to consider such as respect man, as soon as created, and when in his first estate, and the honour and happiness of that estate; not what regard his internal honour and excellency, being created in the image and likeness of God, which lay in his wisdom and knowledge; in his holiness and righteousness; in the right use of his rational powers, his understanding, will, and affections; in communion with God, and in his frequent appearances to him, which have been treated of; but what regard his external honour and happiness; as,

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[k] It was a notion of the Chaldeans, that the air is full of dæmons, Laert. Proem. ad Vit. Philos. p. 6.

I. His being placed in the garden of Eden; for an habitation to dwell in; for the support of his animal life; and for his exercise in the culture and dressing of it.

1. For his habitation; *And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden*; and there he put the man whom *he had formed*, Gen. ii. 8. Indeed, the whole earth was made to be inhabited by man, as it has been ever since the creation of it; the heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but he has reserved that part of his creation for himself, for the habitation of his holiness; and for his attendants, the holy angels; *But the earth hath he given to the children of men*, for them to dwell in. And though Adam was heir and lord of the whole world, yet there was one particular spot more excellent than all the rest, assigned him for his residence; even as a king of a large country has his royal seat, palace, and court, in some particular part of it: and it appears that this garden of Eden was not the whole world, as some have thought, which, for its delightfulness and fertility, might be called a garden; but though it was exceeding delightful and fruitful, in comparison of what it is now, yet it is certain, that the garden of Eden was a distinct spot from the rest of the world; this is clear from the man being said to be put into it when created, which shews that he was formed without it, and when made, was removed into it; as also from his being driven out of it when he had sinned. To which may be added, that we read of a land that was at the East of it; see Gen. iv. 16. It is called the garden of God, because of his planting; and of Eden, because of the pleasantness and delightfulness of it; as the word signifies; hence any spot that was uncommonly fruitful and delightful, is compared unto it, Gen. xiii. 10. Where this garden was, cannot be said with any certainty; whether in Armenia, Assyria, or in Judea; most probably it was in Mesopotamia, since we read of an Eden along with some places in that country, Isai. xxxvii. 12. However, it is not to be known at this day; and there are many things that contribute to the obscurity of it; as its being left without any to cultivate it, upon Adam's being ejected from it, and so in course of time must have become ruinous and desolate; and from the curse taking place upon it, as no doubt it did, and upon it chiefly and in the first place, as being man's peculiar habitation: *Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth*: besides, fire might spring up out of the earth, and destroy the trees and ornaments of it; or they might be washed away afterwards by the waters of the flood: and what through the change it might then undergo, as the whole earth did; and through the alteration of the course of the rivers of it, it is no wonder it should not be known at this day where it was. However, it was so delightful a spot, at its first plantation, that the church of Christ is compared unto it, and is called, in allusion to it, *a garden inclosed*—and her plants, *an orchard*, or *paradise of pomegrantes*, Cant. iv. 12, 13. Moreover, it was an emblem of the heavenly state, which is therefore called paradise, Luke xxiii. 43.

II. Adam was put into the garden of Eden for the support of his animal life; where grew trees, not only pleasant to the sight, but good for food; and Adam was allowed to eat of them all excepting one, Gen. ii. 16, 17. there are two trees particularly taken notice of; *the tree of life, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil:* the former is so called, because with the other trees of the garden, it was a means of maintaining Adam's animal life, and perhaps he chief means of it; and so of the continuance of his life, so long as he stood in his integrity; for notwithstanding his body was gifted with immortality, this it had not from the constitution of it, but from the gift of God; and was to be continued in the use of means, and by eating of the fruit of this tree in particular, though what it was, and its fruit, are not now to be known by us: not that it had such a virtue in it as to prevent diseases; to which Adam's body was not, as yet, subject; nor such as to give and preserve immortality, and continue it, as Adam vainly thought it would, after he had sinned; which seems to be supposed in Gen. iii. 22. spoken according to this sense of things; but this tree was planted and pointed at, and called by this name, because it was a token that Adam had his natural life from God, the God of his life; and that it depended upon him, and that he might expect the continuance of it so long as he kept his state of integrity: it was also an emblem of Christ, who is therefore called the tree of life, Rev. xxii. 2. But not then to Adam, unless of him as his Creator, from whom, as such, he had his life and being; but not of him as Mediator, who, as such, is the author and giver of life, spiritual and eternal; but of him, as such, Adam had no knowledge, and so could not be a symbol of spiritual and eternal life to him, in that his then present state, though it might be after his fall. There was another tree, called *the tree of knowledge of good and evil:* what that tree was, cannot be said; it is generally thought to be the apple tree; founded upon a passage in Cant. viii. 5. Others have thought of the fig-tree, because that Adam and Eve immediately plucked the leaves of that tree, to cover their naked bodies with; but after they had suffered so much by eating the fruit of it, it can hardly be supposed, if this was the tree, that they would have so much as touched its leaves, and much less have wrapped their bodies with them; and there is no sufficient foundation for either of them; nor for any other suggested; as the vine-tree, stalks of wheat, &c. and though this tree might be as good for food as any other of the trees, yet it was forbid to be used for that purpose, as a trial of man's obedience. It had its name, not from any virtue that it had of ripening the rational powers of man, and of increasing and improving his knowledge, as say the Jews, who take Adam to be but a great baby, an infant in knowledge; whereas his knowledge of God, and of things natural and moral, was very great: and besides, had he wanted knowledge, this tree could not be the means of accelerating and increasing it, since he was forbid to eat of it; nor was it so called from the lie of the serpent; *God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* But this tree had its name before that lie was told, or any temptation was offered to Eve. But it was so called, either because God hereby tried and made known, whether Adam would obey his will or no; or eventually, since hereby Adam knew by sad experience, what the good was he had lost, and might have enjoyed; and what a bitter and evil thing sin was, and what evil it had brought on him and his posterity; otherwise Adam full well knew before, in the theory, the difference between good and evil; but by his fall, or eating of the fruit of this tree, he knew these things practically; to his great grief and distress.

III. Adam was put into the garden of Eden *to dress it and to keep it*, Gen. ii. 15. for the culture of it; not to worship and serve God in it, as some give the sense of the word: indeed as Adam had a right knowledge of God, and knew it was his duty to worship, serve and glorify God, he took every opportunity of doing it in the garden; and the various trees and plants, and beauties of it, must needs lead him into adoring views of the great Creator; and he might often take his walks in the garden to contemplate the perfections of God displayed in it; even as Isaac went into the field to meditate on divine things. But the sense of the passage is, that he was put into the garden to cultivate it, and keep it in good order, and keep out of it every thing that might be injurious to it; and this was a proper exercise for man in his state of innocence; for it was never the will of God that men should in any state live an idle and lazy life; nor indeed any of his creatures, the most exalted; the angels are ministering spirits, employed in the service of God, and in ministrations to their fellow-creatures. Yet the work of man in the garden was without toil and fatigue, he did not eat his bread with the sweat of his brow, as after his fall; but his service in it was attended with the utmost delight and pleasure; nor was it at all dishonourable to him, nor inconsistent with the high, honourable and happy estate in which he was.

IV. What added to the delight and fruitfulness of the garden of Eden, was a river that went out of it to water it; which was parted into four heads or branches, the names of which were Pison, Gihon, and Hiddekel or Tigris, and Euphrates; which may be symbols of the gospel and its doctrine, which, like a fountain or river went forth out of Zion the church, and makes it chearful and fruitful; and of the ordinances of it, those still waters of the sanctuary; or of the Spirit and his grace, which are rivers of living waters which flow from them that believe; or rather of the everlasting love of God, that pure river of water of life, a river of Eden, or of pleasure; the four heads and branches of which are election, redemption, effectual vocation, and eternal life, Rom. viii. 30.

II. Another remarkable event in providence, relating to the honour of man in his estate of innocence, is the bringing of all the creatures to him to give names unto them, and whatsoever names he gave them they were called by, Gen. ii. 19. which was a proof and instance of his great wisdom and knowledge, part of the image of God he was created in; for to give names to creatures suitable to their nature, required a large share of knowledge of them; insomuch that Plato said, that it seemed to him that that nature was more than human that gave names to things; and besides, by the creatures being brought unto him for such a purpose, whether by the ministry of angels, or by an instinct in them, it was putting him into the possession of them, as being their lord and proprietor; whose dominion over them was declared when created, and now confirmed by this act.

III. Another providential event, and which shews the care of God over Adam and his concern for him, is providing an help-meet for him, and a partner with him in civil and religious things, man being a sociable creature; and whereas no suitable one could be found among the creatures, he cast man into a deep sleep, and took out a rib from him, and of that made a woman, brought her to him and joined them together in marriage, by whom he could propagate his species and live a social life; which shews that marriage is honourable, being instituted in paradise, and not at all inconsistent with the pure state of man in innocence; and it was also typical of the marriage of Christ, the second Adam, and his church; and of their mutual union and communion; see Eph. v. 31, 32.

OF THE LAW GIVEN TO ADAM, AND THE COVENANT MADE WITH HIM IN HIS STATE OF INNOCENCE.

THE manner in which God governs rational Creatures is by a law, as the rule of their obedience to him, and which is what we call God's moral government of the world; and as he gave a law to angels, which some of them kept, and have been confirmed in a state of obedience to it; and others broke it, and plunged themselves into destruction and misery: so God gave a law to Adam, and which was in the form of a covenant, and in which Adam stood as a covenant-head to all his posterity. And I shall endeavour to shew what that law was, that it was in the form of a covenant, and that Adam was a federal head in it.

I. The law given him was both of a natural and positive kind. God, who is the Creator of all, Judge of all the earth, and King of the whole world, has a right to give what laws he pleases to his creatures, and they are bound as creatures, and by the ties of gratitude, to observe them. The natural law, or law of nature, given to Adam, was concreated with him, written on his heart, and engraved and imprinted in his nature from the beginning of his existence; by which he was acquainted with the will of his maker, and directed to observe it; which appears from the remains of it in the hearts of all men, and even of the Gentiles; and from that natural conscience in every man, which, if not by some means lulled asleep, that it does not perform its office, excuses men from blame when they do well, and accuses them, and charges them with guilt when they do ill, Rom. ii. 14, 15. and likewise from the inscription of this law, in a spiritual and evangelic manner, on regenerate persons, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts,* Jer. xxxi. 33. so that they become the epistle of Christ, having the law as from him, and by his Spirit written in them, and the Spirit put into them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments, and do them; and this law that was written on Adam's heart, and is reinscribed in regeneration, is the same with the Decalogue, as to the substance of it; and, excepting such things in it as were peculiar to the Jews, all of a moral nature; and which is comprised in these two precepts, to which it is reduced by Christ; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;* this was binding on Adam, and on all his posterity.

Besides, This natural law, or law of nature, given to Adam, there were others of a positive kind, which were positive institutions of God, such as man could never have known by the light of nature; but were made known by the revelation of God; such as relate to divine worship, and the manner of it; that there was a God, and that he was to be worshipped, Adam knew by the light of nature; but how, or in what manner, and with what rites and formalities he would be worshipped, this he could not know, but by divine relation. In all dispensations there have been ordinances of divine service; there now are, and there were under the former dispensation; and so in a state of integrity; which were appointed of God, and revealed to man; for the law that forbid the eating of the fruit of a certain tree, is not the only positive law of God; however, it is certain that was one; which was given as a trial of man's obedience to the will of God, whether he would observe it or no; for the evil of the act of eating, did not arise from the nature of the tree, and its fruit, which was as good for food as perhaps any tree in the garden; but from its being disobedience to the will of God. And be it what it may, in which God is disobeyed, it matters not; and by so much the lesser that is which is forbidden, by so much the greater is the sin of disobedience, the more aggravated, and the more inexcusable.

II. This law given to Adam, taken in its complex view, as both natural and positive, was in the form of a covenant; the same to be both a law and a covenant, is not at all inconsistent; so the law given to the people of Israel from mount Sinai, is also called a covenant, Exod. xxiv. 7. and Deut. v. 1—3. yea, the covenant of grace is called a law, the law of Christ's mediatorship, which was in his heart to fulfil; even the covenant he made with his Father, and his Father with him, Psal. xl. 8. The law given to Adam, as it was a law, sprung from the sovereignty of God, who had a right to impose a law upon him, whatsoever he thought fit; as it was a covenant, it was an act of condescension and goodness in God, to enter into it with man, his creature; he could have required obedience to his law, without promising any thing on account of it; for it is what God has a prior right unto, and therefore a recompence for it cannot be claimed; if, therefore, God thinks fit, for the encouragement of obedience, to promise in covenant any good, it is all condescension, it is all kindness.

Moreover it may be observed, that the law given to Adam, is expressly called a covenant, as it should seem in Hos. vi. 7. *but they, like men,* (or like Adam) *have transgressed the covenant:* the sense of which seems to be, that as Adam transgressed the covenant God made with him; so the Israelites had transgressed the covenant God made with them; for as well may Adam's transgression of the law or covenant be referred to here, as his palliating his sin, after the commission of it, is referred to in Job xxxi. 33. Besides, the terms by which the positive law given to Adam is expressed, manifestly imply a covenant; as that if he eat of the forbidden fruit, he should surely die; which implies, that if he abstained from it, he should surely live; which formally constitute a covenant; even a promise and a threatening. To which may be added, the distinction of two covenants of grace and works, called the law of faith, and the law of works; and a twofold righteousness and obedience yielded to the one, and to the other, the righteousness which is of faith, and the righteousness which is of the law, Gal. iv. 24. Rom. iii. 27. for without the law of Adam, as a covenant, two covenants cannot be fairly made out; for though in Heb. viii. we read of a first and second, an old and a new covenant; yet these respect one and the same covenant, under different dispensations; and though in the passage referred to, the covenant at Sinai may be intended as one, yet as a repetition, and a new edition of the covenant made with Adam.

This covenant is by divines called by various names; sometimes a covenant of friendship, man being in friendship with God, when it was made with him; of which there are many instances; as the placing him in the garden of Eden, putting all the creatures in subjection to him, and providing an help-meet for him; appearing often to him, and talking friendly with him, and granting him communion with him; and it was an act of friendship to him, to enter into covenant with him; and whilst Adam observed this, he remained in friendship with God; and it was the breach of this covenant that separated chief friends. Sometimes they call it a covenant of nature, it being made with Adam as a natural man, and a natural head of his posterity; and promised natural blessings to him and his; was co-eval with his nature; and was made with all human nature, or with all mankind, in Adam. It is also called a covenant of innocence: because made with man in his innocent state; and who, as long as he kept this covenant, continued innocent; but when he brake it, he was no more so. And it is frequently called the legal covenant, the covenant of works, as the scripture calls it, the law of works, as before observed; it promised life on the performance of good works; its language was, Do this and live. And it sometimes has the name of the covenant of life, from the promise of life in it; though not in such sense as the covenant with Levi, as a type of Christ, is called, the covenant of life; for it is life of a lower kind that was promised to Adam, than what was promised to Christ, for his people, as will be seen hereafter.

III. As in all covenants there are contracting parties, so in this. God is one of the parties in this covenant; nor was it unworthy of God to enter into a covenant with Adam; for if it was not unworthy of God to make a covenant of conservation with Noah; a covenant of circumcision with Abraham; and a covenant of royalty with David; a covenant respecting the kingdom, and the continuance of it in his family; men in a fallen state; then it could not be unworthy of God to make one with Adam in his perfect state; yea, even since, on the behalf of his people, he makes a covenant with the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the creeping things of the ground, Hos. ii. 18. Besides, to make a covenant with Adam, was a display of his goodness to him. As he was the work of his hands, he must have a regard to him; as every artificer has for his work; and would not despise him, but be concerned for his good; and therefore in covenant promised good things to him, in case of obedience to his will: this his covenant also flowed from his sovereignty; since all his good things are his own, and he can do with them as he pleases; make promises of them in a covenant way; in like manner he disposed of some of them in such a way to Adam.

The other contracting party was Adam; who gave a full and hearty assent to what was proposed to him. The stipulation on the part of God, was proposing and promising good, on condition of obedience. The stipulation, or restipulation on the part of man, was his free and full consent to yield the obedience proposed, in expectation of the promise fulfilled; and this may be concluded from the law he was to obey being written on his heart; which he had full knowledge of, approved of, and assented to; for which he had the most sincere affection; and the inclination and bias of his will were strongly towards it: and as for the positive law, which forbid him to eat of a certain tree; his will was to observe it; his resolution to keep it; as appears from what Eve said to the serpent, tempting her; *God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die*, Gen. iii. 3. which shews, that she and her husband believed what God had said; judged it to be reasonable to hearken to it; and were determined to observe it: and man had also power to keep this covenant; being made after the image and likeness of God; pure and upright, possessed of a clear understanding of it, a strong affection for it, and a full resolution to keep it: for it was not till sin took place, that the nature of man was weakened, and he unable to keep the law; *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, &c.* or what man could not do in fulfilling the law, his nature being weakened by sin; for then, and not before, was it in such an incapacity. Though it should be observed, that man was not left to his liberty; it was not at his option, whether he would assent to the proposal in the covenant, and the condition of it; he had not an alternative given him, to agree or not agree, since obedience was due to God, whether he promised him any thing or no. Wherefore this covenant differs from any covenants among men; in which the parties not only freely agree to make a covenant, but it is at the option of one, whether he will accept of and agree to the proposal of the other. So that this covenant made with Adam, is not strictly and properly a covenant, such as is among men; but is rather a covenant on one side, as a covenant of promise is; and a covenant of God with man, rather than a covenant of man with God.

The obedience required of man in this covenant, was personal, perfect, and perpetual. It was personal; it was to be performed in his own person, and not by another for him; as is the obedience of Christ, which is not personal to them, who are made righteous by it; or as would have been the obedience of Adam, had he stood, as reckoned to his posterity: which, though personal to him, would not have been so to them; as his disobedience, by which they are made sinners, is not personal to them. It was perfect obedience that was required of him, both as to parts and as to degrees; it was to be yielded to all the commandments of God, without exception, and to be performed in the most perfect manner; as to matter, all the commands of God, natural and positive, were to be observed; and as to manner, just as the Lord commanded them. And then this obedience was to be perpetual; it was not to be done for a time only, but always; life, and the continuance of it, depended on it; otherwise, if a stop was made in it, the law condemned, and the man became accursed; *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. So that man was bound by it for ever, as a law; but as considered as the condition of a covenant, it was to be yielded to as such, until man was confirmed in his estate, as the angels are; and, as some divines think, until he had children arrived to an age capable of obeying or sinning.

IV. The law given to Adam, as it had the nature of a covenant, it contained a promise in it, and had a sanction annexed to it.

1. It contained a promise; which was a promise of life, of natural life to Adam, and of a continuation of it so long as he should observe the condition of it; just as life was promised to the Israelites, and a continuance in it, in the land of Canaan, so long as they should observe the law of God; for neither the law of Moses, nor the law of nature, made promise of any other than of a natural life. Some divines, and these of great name and figure in the churches of Christ, think, and indeed it is most generally received, that Adam continuing in his obedience, had a promise of eternal life. I cannot be of that mind. There is indeed, an ambiguity in the phrase eternal life; if no more is meant by it, than living for ever in his present life; it will not be denied; but if by it is designed such a state of glory and happiness, which saints shall enjoy in heaven to all eternity; that must be denied for the following reasons:

1. Adam's covenant was but a natural covenant; and which was made with a natural man, and which covenant promised no supernatural blessing, neither grace nor glory; for as for spiritual blessings, these the elect are blessed with only in heavenly places in Christ, Eph. i. 3. — 2. It was in another covenant more early than that of Adam's, in which eternal life was promised and secured; God, that cannot lie, promised it before the world began; and this promise was put into Christ's hands, even from all eternity; and the blessing itself

vas secured in him for all for whom it was designed, Tit. i. 2. — 3. Eternal
fe is only through Christ as the Mediator of the covenant of grace; it comes
y no other hands but his; it is *through Christ Jesus our Lord*; he came to
pen the way of it, that *we might have life, and that more abundantly*; a more
bundant, durable, and excellent life, than Adam had in innocence: Christ, as
Mediator, had a *power to give eternal life*, to as many as the Father has given
im; and he does give it to all his sheep, that know his voice, hearken to him,
id follow him, John x. 10, 28. — 4. If eternal life could have been by Adam's
ovenant, it would have been by works; or that covenant was a covenant of
orks; and if by works, then not of grace; it would not have been the gift of
od, as it is said to be; *The gift of God is eternal life*, χαρισμα, a free-grace-
ift. Eternal life is no other than consummate salvation in the future state;
id that it is said to be of grace, and denied to be of works; see Rom. vi. 23.
hould the question of the young man in the gospel, and Christ's answer to it,
: objected, Matt. xix. 16—22. *Good Master, what good thing shall I do that*
may inherit eternal life? — If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;
may be observed, Christ answers him, and deals with him on his own prin-
iples; the man was upon the bottom of his own good works, and seeking for
ternal life by them; and since he sought for life that way, Christ directs him
keep the commands, there being no good thing better than keeping them;
ie young man asked him what they were; he tells him; upon which he was
ery alert, and thought himself in a very good way for heaven: but Christ,
irther to try him, and to convince him that eternal life was not to be enjoyed
y any good thing done by him, bids him, if he would be perfect, sell all that
e had, and give to the poor; on which he went away sorrowful, unwilling
part with his possessions; and so found that eternal life was not to be had by
oing. — 5. Life and immortality, or an immortal, eternal life, and the way to it
re only brought to light by the gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10. not by the light of nature
or by the law of Moses; only by the gospel of Christ. — 6. There is no pro-
ortion between the best works of man, even sinless obedience, and eternal
fe; wherefore, though the threatening of Death to Adam, contains in it eter-
al death, it does not follow, that the promise of life includes eternal life; since
iough eternal death is the just wages and demerit of sin; yet eternal life is not
ie wages and merit of the works of men; it is the free gift of God, Rom. vi. 23.

11. The sanction of the law and covenant made with Adam, was death; *In the*
ay thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, Gen. ii. 17. which includes death cor-
oral, spiritual or moral, and eternal. — 1. A corporal death; which lies in a se-
aration of soul and body; as this was threatened, so the sentence of it was pro-
ounced on the day man eat of the tree; *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt re-*
urn, Gen. iii. 19. Adam was at once stripped of the immortality of his body,
iat gift was at once withdrawn from him, and he became a mortal man; the
eeds of death took place in him; and he was immediately subject to diseases,

disorders, and miseries, which issue in death. — 2. A spiritual, or rather moral death seized upon him; which lies in a separation of the soul from God, and communion with him: in an alienation from the life of God; in a deformation of the image of God; in a corruption and defilement of the several powers and faculties of the soul; in an impotency and disinclination to that which is good; he became dead in trespasses and sins, as all his posterity are. — 3. An eternal death, which lies in a separation of soul and body from God; in a loss of the divine presence, and in a sense of divine wrath; both which are contained in these words, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire*; a symbol of which was the ejection of Adam out of paradise; as eternal life is the gift of God, so eternal death is the wages of sin, Rom. vi. 23.

V. In this covenant Adam acted not as a private person for himself only, but as a federal head and representative of his whole posterity; and in this he was alone; Eve was not a federal head with him, he was alone, before an help-meet was found for him; yet she was included in it, being formed out of him; and all his posterity, who spring from him; but the man Christ Jesus is to be excepted, since he descended not from him by ordinary generation, and was a Mediator, the Head of another and better covenant. But as to his natural posterity, it may be observed, there were many things which were common to him and them; and in which they had an equal concern; as in dominion over the creatures, the increase and propagation of their species, the food granted them, and the law of marriage. However, that in the covenant with him he was the federal head of them, appears, — 1. From Adam being a figure or type of him that was to come; that is, of Christ, Rom. v. 14. Now in what was Adam a type of Christ, but in his being the federal head of his posterity? Not as a man; so all his sons might be: not on account of his extraordinary production; for though that of both was in an uncommon way, yet in a different way; the one was created out of the earth; the other, though not begotten of man, was born of a woman, as other men be; but they were both covenant-heads to their respective offspring; and the parallel between them as such, is formed by the apostle in the context of the place referred to; that as the one, Adam, as an head, conveyed sin and death to all his natural seed; so the other, Christ, as an head, conveyed grace, righteousness, and life to his spiritual offspring. — 2. From Adam being called the first man, and the first Adam, and described as natural and earthly, in distinction from whom, Christ is called the second man, and the last Adam, and described as spiritual, and the Lord from heaven; and these are represented as if the only two men in the world, because the two heads of their respective offspring. — 3. From the threatening taking place upon the sin of Adam, not on himself only, but on all his succeeding offspring; as they were in him, they sinned in him; and death, the sentence of death, passed on them in him. In him they all died; through his offence death reigned over them, and judgment came upon them all to condemnation, and by his disobedience they were made, accounted, and charged as sinners, Rom. v. 12—19.

1 Cor. xv. 22. — 4. It was no unusual thing with God to make covenants with men, and their posterity, unborn; thus God made a covenant with Noah, and all that should descend from him, that he would no more destroy the earth with a flood; and with Abraham, and his natural seed, a covenant of circumcision, which should continue till the Messiah came; and the covenant at Horeb, with the children of Israel, was not only with them that were then present, and on the spot, but with those that should be hereafter descendants of them. And so the covenant of grace was made with Christ, as the Head of his chosen ones, who were considered in him, and had grace and spiritual blessings given them in him before the world was. — 5. Nor have any of Adam's posterity reason to complain of such a procedure; since if Adam had stood in his integrity, they would have partook of all the blessed consequences of his standing, and enjoyed all the happiness that he did; and therefore should not murmur, nor esteem it any injustice in God, in putting their affairs in his hand, that they share in the miseries of his fall; for if they would have received good things through him, had he stood, why should they complain of receiving evil things through his fall? And if this does not satisfy, — 6. Let it be considered, that since God in his infinite wisdom, thought proper that men should have an head and representative of them, in whose hands their good and happiness should be placed; who so fit for it as the first man, the common parent of mankind, made after the image of God so wise, so holy, just, and good? and could it have been possible for all men to have been upon the spot at once, and it had been proposed to them to choose an head and representative for themselves; who would they, who could they have chose, but the first man, that was their natural parent, of whose blood they were made; and who, they might reasonably think, had the most tender affection for them, and would take the greatest care of them, and of their good, put into his hands? so that it is reasonable to conclude, they would all to a man have united in the choice of him. — 7. To silence all complaints and murmurings, let it be observed, that what God gave to Adam, as a federal head, relating to himself and and his posterity, he gave it in a way of sovereignty; that is, he might, and might not have given it; he was not obliged to it; it was his own that he gave, and therefore might choose whom he pleased in whose hands to deposit it; and who can say to him What doest thou?

OF THE SIN AND FALL OF MAN.

THE law that was given to our first parents, and the covenant that was made with them, were soon broken by them; *They like men* (or like Adam) *have transgressed the covenant*, Hos. vi. 7. they continued not long in their obedience to it, and in that state of integrity in which they were created; but sinning, fell from it, into an estate of sin and misery.

I. I shall consider the persons sinning, the same to whom the law was given, and with whom the covenant was made; the common parents of mankind, Adam and Eve; first Eve and then Adam; for Eve was first in the transgression, and then Adam; though Adam was formed first, Eve sinned first.

1. Eve, she was beguiled and deceived by the old serpent the devil, to eat of the forbidden fruit, by which she sinned and fell from her original state; her sin may be thought to begin in holding a parley with the serpent; especially on such a subject as the forbidden fruit; she might have suspected that there was some design upon her, by introducing such a subject of conversation, and by so extraordinary a creature; and therefore should have broke off at once, and have abstained from all appearance of evil, from every thing that tended, or might be a leading step unto it; though there is what may be said in excuse of her, that she took the question put to her, to be a very harmless and innocent one; and to which, in the innocence and integrity of her heart, she gave a plain and honest answer: some have thought she failed in the account she gave of the law concerning the tree forbid to be eaten of; both by adding to it, saying, *neither shall ye touch it*; and by diminishing the sense of it, *lest ye die*; as if it was a question of doubt with her, whether they should die or no, if they eat of it; whereas God had said, *Thou shalt surely die*. But she is to be defended in all this; for though touching is not expressed in the prohibition, it is implied; since the fruit could not be plucked from the tree, nor taken in the hand, nor put to the mouth, without touching: besides, this may be considered as an argument of Eve's, from the lesser to the greater, that if they might not so much as touch the fruit, then most certainly not eat of it. And as for the other phrase, *least*, or *lest perhaps ye die*, this does not always express a doubt, but the certainty of the event that would follow; see Psal. ii. 12. But her sin lay in giving credit to what the serpent said, *Ye shall not surely die*; in direct opposition to the word of God, *Thou shalt surely die*; which she now began to doubt of, and disbelieve; and for the strengthening of which doubt and disbelief, the serpent might take of the fruit, eat of it himself, and not only commend it as a most delicious fruit, but observe to her, that she saw with her eyes that no such effect as death, or any symptom of it, followed upon his eating it; and he might further suggest, that that superior knowledge and wisdom to the rest of the creatures he had, was owing to his eating this fruit; and that if she and her husband did but eat of it, they would increase and improve their knowledge as to be equal to angels; and which, he observed, was known to God. Now upon all this there arose a lustful inordinate desire of eating the fruit, it being of so lovely an aspect, so good for food, and having such a virtue in it as to make wiser and more knowing; so that at once there sprung up in her, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*; hence she inwardly sinned, before she eat of the forbidden fruit. Much the same progress may be observed in her sinning, which the apostle James observes of sin in common; *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin*, James i. 15. for lust being conceived, she could no longer abstain, but took of the fruit, either from the serpent or from the

tree, and eat of it, and so finished her transgression; and not content with eating it herself, but she gave to her husband to eat of it also; who either was with her, or at some distance, to whom she went directly, with some of the fruit in her hand, as may be supposed, eating it all the way she went; and when she came to Adam, held it up to him to him to look at, as most lovely to behold, and commended the deliciousness of it; and no doubt used the same arguments with him to eat, the serpent had made use of with her; and he hearkened to her, eat of it, and sinned also. For,

11. That Adam sinned as well as Eve, is most certain; for though it is said, *Adam was not deceived*; the meaning is, that he was not first deceived, that he was not deceived by the serpent, but by his wife; and when she is said to be in the transgression, the sense is, that she was in the transgression first; but not only in it; for Adam was also; hence we read of *Adam's transgression*, Rom. v. 14. And if he was with his wife when she eat of the fruit, as seems from the letter of the text, Gen. iii. 6. he sinned in not attempting to detect the sophistry of the serpent; in not defending his wife from his assaults; in not persuading her not to eat of the fruit; in not warning her of her danger; yea, in not using his conjugal authority, and laying his commands upon her not to eat; for if he was present and silent, he must be criminal and accessary to her sin; but perhaps he was not with her. But his sin lay in hearkening to his wife, to her sollicitations and requests, upon which it is put, Gen. iii. 17. And she might urge, that they must be mistaken about the sense of the law; that God never meant by it that they should certainly die for eating the fruit, since she had eat of it, and was alive and well: by such insinuations Adam was prevailed upon to eat also. Though some think that he was not deceived by her; that he knew what he did, and what would be the consequence of it; he sinned with his eyes open; knew full well the sense of the law, and what would be the effect of it; but what he did was in complaisance to his wife, and from a vehement passionate love and affection for her; because he would not grieve her; and that she might not die alone, he chose to eat and sin and die with her: but then this was all very criminal; it was his duty to love his wife, as his own flesh; but then he was not to love her more than God; and to hearken to her voice more than to the voice of God. However Adam sinned, and his sin is more taken notice of than the sin of Eve; and it is to his sin that all the sad effects of the fall are imputed; sin entered into the world by him, and death; in Adam all died; for he being the federal head of all his posterity, he sinned not as a single private person, but as the common head of all mankind. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. Some have thought, that if Eve only had sinned, and not Adam, her sin would have been personal, and only affected herself, she not being a federal head with Adam; but she could not have been the mother of a sinless posterity; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? and she must have died for her offence; indeed God could have created another woman for Adam; from whom an holy seed might have sprung, had he stood. But this is all conjecture;

nor is it so clear a point that Eve had no concern in federal headship; since though the law was given to Adam, and the covenant was made with him before she was formed; yet it was made known unto her, and she assented to it, and looked upon herself as equally bound by it, and shared in the same privileges Adam did; particularly in having dominion over the creatures; and she was, as he, the common parent of their posterity, the mother of all living; was one flesh with him, and both the one Adam, the head of all mankind.

II. How creatures so wise and knowing, so holy, just and good; made after the image and likeness of God, came to sin as they did, deserves an enquiry: To what could their sin and fall be owing? Not unto God; he is not the author of sin, nor tempts unto it; nor is he tempted by it: nor to Satan, only as an instrument, inticing and deceiving; but to themselves, to their own will, it was their own act and deed.

1. Not to God; he forbid it: was displeased with it; and resented it to the highest degree. Those who are differently minded from us, represent our sentiments about Adam's sin, as chargeable with making God the author of sin; which we abhor and detest. Let us therefore a little consider what concern God had in this affair.

1. What he did not do. — 1. He did not restrain the serpent from tempting; nor withhold man from sinning. He could have kept the serpent out of the garden, and laid his commands on Satan, not to tempt our first parents; and he could have hindred the temptation from having any influence upon them; but this he did not; nor did he withhold Adam from sinning, which he could have done; as well as he withheld Abimelech from sinning against him, as he told him he had; and Laban and Esau from hurting Jacob; and Balaam from cursing the people of Israel; he could have done the one as well as the other; but he did not; nor was he obliged to it. And on the other hand, he did not force nor impel either Satan to tempt, or man to sin; they both acted their part freely, without any force or compulsion. Satan, full of spite and malice, and moved with envy at the happiness of man, most freely and voluntarily entered into a scheme to destroy him, and with all his heart pursued it, and carried it into execution; and our first parents, with the full consent of their wills, and without any force upon them, took and eat the forbidden fruit; none of Adam's sons and daughters ever eat a heartier meal, and with more good will, or with greater gust, than our first parents eat the forbidden fruit; stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret pleasant. — 2. God did not withdraw any favour from man he had bestowed upon him, nor any power and strength to stand which he had given him; for when God does any thing of this kind, it is by way of punishment for a preceding sin or sins; but no such punishment could be inflicted on Adam, because as yet he had not sinned; but God left him in the full possession of all the powers and abilities he had conferred upon him; so that he could have stood if he would; he did not indeed grant him new favours, nor give him additional power and strength, which he was not obliged unto;

he gave him enough, had he made right use of it, to have continued in his integrity; and to have resisted every temptation. Now these negative acts of God could never make him chargeable with being the author of Adam's sin and fall.

2. There are other things which God did do, or acts which are ascribed unto him, relative to this affair. — 1. He foreknew the sin and fall of Adam; as he foreknows all things that come to pass in this world, which none will deny that own the omniscience and prescience of God; and if God foreknew the most trivial and contingent events that befal any of his creatures; then surely such an event as the fall of Adam, so important in its consequences, could never escape his fore-knowledge; now God's fore-knowledge of things future flows from the determinations of his will; he foreknows that things will be, because he has determined they shall be. Wherefore — 2. God pre-determined the fall of Adam; this fell under his decree, as all things do that come to pass in the world; there is nothing comes to pass without his determining will, *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass*, when *the Lord commandeth it not?* Lam. iii. 37. nothing is done, or can be done, God not being willing it should be done: that the fall of Adam was by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God is certain; because the sufferings and death of Christ, by which is the redemption of men from that sin, and all others, were ordained before the foundation of the world; and which must have been precarious and uncertain, if Adam's fall was not by a like decree, Acts ii. 23. but then neither the fore-knowledge of God, nor any decree of God, laid Adam under a necessity of sinning; it is true, there arises from hence a necessity of immutability, that is, that the things God has decreed should unchangeably come to pass, but not a necessity of co-action or force; as Judas and the Jews sinned freely, the one in betraying, the other in putting Christ to death; so Adam sinned freely, without force or compulsion, notwithstanding any decree of God concerning him; so that these do not make God at all chargeable with being the author of his sin; he and he alone was the author of it. — 3. God permitted or suffered Adam to sin and fall; which permission was not a bare permission or sufferance; God was not an idle spectator of this affair; the permission was voluntary, wise, holy, powerful and efficacious, according to the unchangeable counsel of his will: he willed, and he did not will the sin of Adam, in different respects; he did not will it as an evil, but as what he would overrule for good, a great good; he willed it not as sin, but [illegible] as a mean of glorifying his grace and mercy, justice and holiness: and that this was not a bare and inefficacious permission, but attended with influence, is clear; because, — 3. There was a concourse of divine providence attending this action, and influencing it as an action, without which it could never have been performed; as divine providence supports every wicked man in his being throughout the whole course of his vicious life, and so while he is sinning; the same providence upheld Adam in his being, whilst he was eat-

ing the forbidden fruit; otherwise, as Eve could not have stretched out her hand and taken of the fruit of the tree and eaten it, so neither could Adam have put forth his hand and taken it of her. The influences of divine providence concur with every action, be it what it may, as an action, since all live, and move, and have their being in God; every action, as an action, is from God; but the obliquity, irregularity and sinfulness of the action, is from the creature: wherefore God is not the author of any sin; as he is not the author of sin in any man, notwithstanding the concourse of his providence with every action of his, as an action, so neither of the sin of Adam. — 5. God may be said, by planting a garden, and that particular tree of the knowledge of good and evil in it, and by forbidding him to eat of that fruit, to afford an occasion of sinning to Adam; but had he not a right, as the Lord of the world, to plant a garden; and as a sovereign Lord to plant what tree he pleased in it, and to forbid the eating of it, without being blamed for it? especially when he gave to Adam a power to abstain from it, had he made use of it; and God can no more on this account be chargeable with being the author of Adam's sin, than by giving wealth and riches to a wicked man, which are occasions of his sinning, by consuming them on his lusts.

II. The concern that Satan had in this affair may next be considered; and what he did was not by force or compulsion, but by persuasion; he acted the part of a tempter, and from thence he has that appellation, Matt. iv. 3. he enticed and seduced by lies and false reasonings, and so prevailed; he is said to beguile Eve, and to deceive the whole world, the representatives of it, in order to which he made use of a serpent, and not a mere form and appearance of one that he assumed; as is clear from its being reckoned one of the beasts of the field, and said to be more subtle than the rest, for which this creature is notorious; and from the curse denounced on it to go on its belly: and eat dust all its days; and yet it was not merely a serpent, or a serpent only, but Satan in it; as appears not only from its having the faculty of speech, which such creatures have not; but from its being possessed of reasoning powers, capable of forming an artful scheme, and of conducting it and carrying it into execution, so as to gain his point; and from the seduction and ruin of men being ascribed to the old serpent the devil, Rev. xii. 9.

Satan shewed great craftiness and cunning throughout this whole affair; in making use of the serpent, the most subtle of all creatures, which could easily creep into the garden unobserved, which some other creatures could not; and it might be a very lovely creature to look at, adorned with beautiful spots, and of a bright shining golden colour, which, when the rays of the sun struck on it, made it look very lovely, as such creatures in those parts are said to be; all which might recommend it to Eve: she might take particular notice of it, and have a particular fondness for it; it might be very familiar to her, she might wrap it, or suffer it to wrap itself about her arms; and what might make her still more fond of it, was its faculty of speaking; whereby she could converse with it about indifferent things; and this familiarity might continue some time before Satan in it made his attack upon her; so that she was used to it, and it was no surprise to her to hear it speak. Satan's cunning also appeared in go-ng to work with our first parents so early, as soon as they were well settled n their state of happiness, and when they had but just tasted of the pleasures of t, and before the habits of virtue and goodness were more strengthened, when t might have been more difficult for him to have worked upon them, and gain-d his point; as also in making his attack on Eve first, and when she was alone, nd her husband not with her, to aid and assist, counsel and protect her. Nor id he discover himself to be what he really was: had he declared himself to be n apostate spirit, that had left his first estate, not bearing to be under the go-ernment of God, he was so cruel and tyrannical; had he set out with such outrageous blasphemy against God as this, the woman would have fled from im at once, with the utmost abhorrence and detestation of him, which would ave marred his scheme at once; but he begun, seemingly with owning the uthority of God: and that he had power to forbid the use of any of the trees of the garden; and only questioned whether he had done so or no; he could carcely believe that a God so good as he was, and particularly to Adam and Eve, had planted a garden for them, and stored it with all manner of fruit, that e would ever restrain them from eating the fruit of any of the trees, and es-ecially would never inflict death upon them for so slight a matter as that; they must surely misunderstand him, and mistake his meaning: and after this, and more conversation, the woman began to doubt whether God had said so or no, or, however, that her husband had mistook his meaning: and had made a wrong eport of it to her, who was not present when the law was given. Satan perceiving that he had gained ground, boldly affirmed, that though they eat, they should not die; and that God knew that such was the virtue of the fruit of that ree, that it would make them wiser and more knowing, even as knowing as God, at least as the angels of God: the woman by this finding that there were an order of creatures superior to them in knowledge, what with the lovely sight of the fruit, and the usefulness of it, especially to make wiser, took of it and eat, and prevailed upon her husband to do so likewise. And thus they sinned and fell, not through any force and compulsion, but through the temptation of Satan, and his seduction.

III. The sin, fall, and ruin of man were of himself. It was not through ignorance and want of knowledge that Adam fell; he was created after the image of God, one part of which lay in wisdom and knowledge; he had no darkness, blindness, nor hardness of heart; he knew God, his Creator and Benefactor; he knew his will, he knew his law, and what would be the consequence of disobedience to it; indeed, he was not so perfect but that he might be imposed upon by the appearance of a false good, presented to his understanding, which his will made choice of, under a shew of good; nor was it through a defect of holiness and righteousness in him; for God made man upright, endued him with rectitude and holiness of nature, with a bias to that which is good, and with an aversion to that which is evil; but as he was made mutable, which he could not otherwise be, he was left to the mutability of his will, and so sinned and fell; which is that folly, or rather weakness, which the highest rank of creatures, in their original estate, are chargeable with in comparison of God, the Creator: should it be said, Why did God make man mutable? it might as well be asked, Why did he not make him God? for immutability, in the strict sense of it, is peculiar to God. Should the question be altered, Why did not he confirm him in the state in which he was created, as he confirmed the elect angels? to which it may be replied, That it is not improbable but that he would have confirmed him, had he continued a little longer in his state of probation. But the truest answer is, that it did not so seem good in his sight; and to shew his sovereignty, he confirmed the elect angels; but did not confirm, as not the rest of the angels, so neither man. And this should satisfy.

OF THE NATURE, &c. OF THE SIN OF MAN.

FIRST, The nature of sin: It seems to have been brought on through inadvertency, thoughtlessness, and being off of guard; it began with doubting and disbelief of what God had said; appeared in an inordinate desire after the forbidden fruit; and an unlawful curiosity of knowing more than he did; and in pride, affecting to be as God; at least to be upon an equality with angels.

The nature of it may be learnt in some measure from the names it goes by; it is called sin, and the sin, the grand sin, the first and fountain of all sin among men, Rom. v. 12. It is called a transgression, v. 14. a transgression of the law, as every sin is defined, 1 John iii. 4. a transgression of the covenant, a breach of that; and what is more heinous than covenant breaking? to break covenant with men is a great evil; but to break the covenant with God is a greater still. It is called disobedience, Rom. v. 19. disobedience to the will of God, and to his law; and as obedience to God is well pleasing to him; so disobedience, in any case, is highly resented by him. It is often called the offence, it being in its nature, and in all its circumstances, very offensive to God, and abominable in his sight, as all sin is; and in the last mentioned places the word used signifies a fall; and hence it is common with us to call this sin the fall of Adam; it being that by which he fell from a state of integrity honour and happiness, into an estate of sin and misery.

II. The aggravations of this sin were, the place where it was committed, and the time when, with other things.

1. With respect to place; it was committed in the garden of Eden. Here man was put when he was formed; nor was he cast out of it till after he had sinned, and for that reason: here were all manner of trees for his use; and he

was allowed to eat of them all excepting one, which was forbidden him; and not to attend to that prohibition, was great ingratitude to his Creator and Benefactor, who had so richly provided for him; and in the midst of all which plenty he sinned. Had it been in a remote part of the world, or in a desert, where this tree grew, and where scarce any thing else was to be had, it would in some measure have extenuated the crime; but in a garden, where he had enough of every thing, it was a very aggravated crime; and by how much the less that was which was forbidden him, by so much the greater was his crime in not abstaining from it.

II. With respect to the time when it was committed; that is, how long after the creation of our first parents. This cannot be precisely determined: some make the time after it too long, and others too short. Some think that the first Adam kept his state of integrity as long as the second Adam lived here on earth; but this is a mere fancy, without any foundation. Some have fancied that he fell on the tenth day of September, and they suppose the creation of the world began with that month; so that as Adam was created on the sixth day, his standing could be no longer than three or four days; and this is supposed for no other reason, but because the Jews in after times, had their grand fast on that day: but that was not for Adam's sin, but their own; and had it been for that, it should have been general, and kept by all mankind, if at all. And others are of opinion that he fell the same day he was created; but the text on which it is founded will not support it, Psal. xlix. 12. since it speaks not of the first man, but of his sons, and those in honour, whose continuance in it is not long; and the word for abideth, or lodgeth, as some choose to render it, signifies often a longer duration than a night's lodging. However, it must be very early that man fell, since the account of his fall is very closely connected with what was done on the first day of his creation; and Satan is said to be a murderer, that is, a destroyer of mankind *from the beginning*, John viii. 44. Now this was an aggravation of Adam's sin, that he should be guilty of it so soon, having just received his being from God; placed in so happy a situation; and blessed with so much honour, power, and authority, and with so many indulgent favours; he and his consort taking their walks in the garden, no doubt, often sung the praises of their great Creator and kind Benefactor, in tuneful lays, in melodious strains; but, like some of their sons afterwards, soon forgat his works.

III. The sin of Adam was a complicated one; he sinned against light and knowledge, and when he was in full power to have resisted the temptation; he could neither plead ignorance nor weakness in excuse of his sin; it was the height of ingratitude to his Maker; it was affronting him in the highest degree, by disbelieving his word, and thereby making him a liar; it was intolerable pride an affectation of deity, or of equality to God; a want of thought, of care, concern, and affection for his posterity, with whose all he was intrusted. In short, it included all sin in it. For the laws of God are so connected together, that he that offends in one point is guilty of all.

Some have laboured to make it appear, that Adam by his sin transgressed the whole Decalogue, or the law of the ten commandments, and no doubt but many, the most, if not all were broken. Dr. Lightfoot expresses it thus, "Adam, at one clap, breaks both the tables, and all the commandments. — 1. He chose him another God, when he followed the devil. — 2. He idolized and deified his own belly, as the apostle's phrase is; his belly he made his God. — 3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not. — 4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had set him. — 5. He dishonoured his Father which was in heaven; wherefore his days were not long in that land which the Lord his God had given him. — 6. He massacred himself and all his posterity. — 7. In his eyes and mind he committed spiritual fornication. — 8. He stole that (like Achan) which God had set aside not to be meddled with; and this his stealth is that which troubles all Israel, the whole world. — 9. He bore witness against God when he believed the witness of the devil above him. — 10. He coveted an evil covetousness, which cost him his life, and all his progeny."

III. The sad effects and consequences of this sin. The account of what befel Adam after his fall, is so short, that much is not to be expected from it; and besides, he was so quickly recovered by the grace of God, and brought to repentance for his sin, and had a better image restored to him than what he had lost; and had so early the revelation of the seed of the woman as a Saviour from this and all other sins; so that the mischiefs that personally accrued to him, are not so manifest; but appear more clearly in his posterity. However, there are so many things said, and hints given, as may lead us plainly to observe some of the sad effects of this sin.

I. A loss of original righteousness followed upon it. God made man upright; but sinning, he lost the uprightness and rectitude of his nature; or the righteousness in which he was created; so that he became unrighteous, nay, full of all unrighteousness; hence it is that there is none of his posterity righteous, no not one. Now this was signified by the nakedness of our first parents, which was immediately perceived by them after their fall; for though it primarily respects the nakedness of their bodies, which was the same before the fall, but then was no occasion of shame to them; but afterwards it was; the reason of which was, because of the loss of their inward clothing the righteousness and holiness of their nature; the want of which, the nakedness of their bodies was now an emblem to them of: and as Adam immediately betook himself to get something to cover himself with, so natural is it for men to seek to obtain a righteousness of their own, to cover their naked souls with; for to be self-righteous is as natural to man as to be sinful: and what men do attain to as a righteousness by their own works, is of no more avail than Adam's fig leaves were to him; cannot cover a man from the sight of divine Justice, nor shelter him from the stormy winds of divine wrath and vengeance; nor justify him in the sight of God; nor entitle him to heaven and happiness, nor introduce him into it.

II. Guilt on the consciences of our first parents presently appeared, and that n an endeavour to hide themselves from the presence of God, among the trees f the garden. Guilt is the consequence of sin in all men; the whole world of dam's posterity is Guilty before God; and this is sometimes intolerable, and othing can remove it but the blood of Christ. And from this consciousness of uilt, flow shame, fear, and hiding themselves from God; they were ashamed to ppear before him; and sin causes shame in every one, more or less, unless ardened, stupified, and past all sense, and are like those that declare their sin, s Sodom; hence men choose to commit sin in secret, in the dark, that their ins may not be seen; nor do they care to come to the light, lest their deeds hould be reproved. Fear followed upon a conciousness of guilt in Adam; I was afraid, &c. as there is in every man more or less, a fearful looking for of udgment and indignation, even in the more audacious; yea, those daring creatures the devils themselves believe and tremble; and through guilt, shame, and ear, Adam hid himself, but to no purpose; there is no fleeing from the presence f God, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike; of what avail ould the shade cast by the trees in the garden be to Adam, to hide him from he all-seeing eye of God, and yet such a notion possesses his posterity; Rev. vi. 15—17.

III. Loss and want of knowledge and understanding, were soon perceived in him. The last instance, of hiding himself, betrays his ignorance and folly, as if the trees in the garden could secure him from the sight and vengeance of the Almighty; instead of gaining the knowledge he unlawfully sought after, he lost much of what he had; hence he is ironically and sarcastically upbraided with it; Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil! and his posterity are represented as foolish, ignorant, and devoid of understanding; *There is none that understandeth*, Rom. iii. 11. Though they may understand natural things and civil things, and somewhat of moral things, though not clearly and distinctly, at least so as to do them; to do good they have no knowledge: but they understand not spiritual things, the things of the Spirit of God, which they neither receive nor know, because they are spiritually discerned. They know not God, so as to glorify him; and much less as in Christ: they know not Christ, nor the way of peace, life, and salvation by him: they know not the Spirit of God, his person, office, and operations; yea, men are as stupid as the beasts of the field, and in some things more so; man is born like a wild ass's colt, and is more ignorant, and less knowing, than the ox and ass, which know their owner; and than birds of passage, which know the time of their coming and going, when men know not the Lord and his judgments.

IV. Our first parents, upon their sinning, were immediately obnoxious to the curse of the law, and it was pronounced on them, along with the serpent; though it is expressed as if it only concerned the body, and temporal things; in which strain run the several curses of the law afterwards; *Cursed shalt thou be in the city, &c.* yet they extend farther, even to the wrath of God on the soul, both here and hereafter; for the curse of the law is no other than the sanction of it, death; and which, as has been seen, is death corporal, spiritual or moral, and eternal; Adam, upon sinning, was at once stript of the immortality of his body, which God had bestowed on it, and became mortal, subject to diseases, and a corporal death, and so all his posterity; In Adam all die; and a spiritual or moral death seized on all the powers and faculties of his soul; his understanding darkened; his mind and conscience defiled; his affections inordinate; his will biassed to that which is evil, and to every good work lifeless and reprobate until restored by the grace of God; as every man is dead in trespasses and sins, until quickened. And eternal death is the just wages of sin, which is no other than the wrath of God revealed against all unrighteousness, and which comes upon the children of disobedience: and there are none of the sons of Adam but as such, and in themselves, are obnoxious to it; even God's elect are *by nature children of wrath as others*, Eph. ii. 3. This is the grand curse, the flying roll in Zechariah's vision, that goes over the whole face of the earth, and cuts off the sinner on this and the other side; and which the wicked will hear at last denounced on them, Go, ye cursed! But the righteous will be saved from it, because Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, and delivered them from wrath to come.

v. Ejection out of paradise is another thing which followed on the sin of Adam; *So he drove out the man*, Gen. iii. 24. An emblem of that alienation from God, from the life of God, and communion with him, which sin has produced, and which has set man at a distance from God; hence Christ suffered to bring his people near unto him; and by his blood they that were afar off were made nigh unto God. And besides these, there are many others, which are the effects of the sin and fall of Adam; as a general corruption and depravity of all the powers and faculties of the soul, which are all immersed in sin, and full of it; and all the members of the body yielded as instruments of unrighteousness; a propensity and proneness to all that is sinful; an inordinate desire after the lusts of the flesh, and of fulfilling them; a serving of divers lusts and pleasures; a serving lusts as pleasures, being lovers of sinful pleasures more than lovers of God. There is, moreover, a disinclination to all that is good, yea, an aversion to it; an hating the good, and loving the evil; yea, the carnal mind is enmity itself to God, and all that is good; and there is also an impotency, an inability to do that which is good; hence man is represented as without strength, having lost it, and become unable to do any thing that is spiritually good; to which may be added, that sin has brought man into a state of slavery to sin, Satan, and the world; this is what we commonly call the corruption and depravity of nature, the effect of the first sin of Adam. This is the pandora, from whence have sprung all spiritual maladies and bodily diseases; all the disasters, distresses, mischiefs, and calamities that are, or have been in the world.

OF THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S SIN TO HIS POSTERITY.

HAVING considered the disobedience of our first parents, and the sad effects of it to themselves, I shall next consider the concern their posterity have in it, and how much they are effected by it. There are two things follow on it with respect to them; the imputation of the guilt of it to them, and the corruption of nature derived to them from it.

I shall begin with the fisrt, as being previous to the other, and the foundation of it, and which is expressed in very strong terms, Rom. v. 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous* The apostle is upon the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; and whereas it might be a difficulty in the minds of some, how any could be justified by the righteousness of another; and he had to do greatly with Jews as well as Gentiles; the former of which might better understand the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; or how all men are made sinners by his sin, than the doctrine of justification by Christ's righteousness; he observes, it is as easy to conceive how men may be made righteous by the obedience of another, namely, through the imputation of that obedience to them, as it is to conceive how all men are made sinners by the disobedience of one man, even through the imputation of that disobedience to them. To set this doctrine in the best light I can, I shall, observe the act of disobedience, by which men are made sinners. — Who they are that are made sinners by it. — In what sense they are made so through it.

I. The act of disobedience; whose it is, and what. — 1. Whose it is: It is sometimes expressed by one that sinned; and more than once called, the *offence of one*, Rom. v. 15, and yet more clearly; *By one man sin entered*, and is called *one man's offence*, and *one man's disobedience*, 12—19. for it is not the sin of one of the apostate spirits, by which men are made sinners; but the sin of one of their own species, one of the same nature, even the common parent of all mankind, and who is expressed by name, where this offence and disobedience is called *the transgression of Adam*; and so 1 Cor. xv. 22. *In Adam all die*, being all in him, and having sinned in him, death comes upon them for it; but then this is to be understood of Adam not to the exclusion of Eve, who was also in the transgression, and first in it, and was the mother of all living. They both have the same name, the same appellative name, man; the same proper name, Adam. Gen. v. 1, 2. were of the same nature; nay, Eve was formed out of a rib of Adam; was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; a part of himself; and by their marriage-relation became one flesh, they had the same law given them, which forbid the eating of the fruit of a certain tree; the same covenant was made with them, and they were both guilty of the same act of disobedience; and had a sentence of punishment pronounced on them both; and which did not rest on their own persons only, but is common to all their posterity, and still continues; which shews that their posterity had a concern in their act of disobedience, in the guilt of it, since they share in their punishment, as all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve do; as in the toil and labour of the one, and his return to the dust; so in the pains of child-bearing in the other, and subjection to the man. — 2. What this disobedience was; which appears from what has been already said, it was disobedience to the law and will of God, in eating the fruit which he had forbid; so disbelieving the word of God, and giving credit to the serpent. Now it was this one act of disobedience, by which Adam's posterity were made sinners; and therefore is sometimes called the one sin, and the one offence; so in Rom. v. 16. some copies read *ενος αμαρτηματος*, by one sin; and so in 17. *εν τω ενι παραπτωματι*, by one offence; and so 18. may be translated as it is in the margin of our bibles; it was a single sin, and the first sin committed in our world; I say in our world, because sin was committed before in the world above, in heaven, by the apostate spirits, the angels that sinned; but with their sin men have no concern; or they are not made sinners by it; but by that sin which first entered into our world, by the one man, Adam; and this the only one of his sins, and that which was first committed by him, and not any after-sins of his; it is what, and it is the only one that was committed by him, whilst he stood the federal-head of his posterity: that he was a covenant-head to us has been proved already; and that he was such when this was committed by him is plain, because his posterity were then considered in him, as a federal-head, and sinned in him, which brought death upon them all Rom. v. 12. But no sooner had Adam committed this first sin, by which the covenant with him was broke, but he ceased to be a covenant-head; the law given him, as a covenant of works, was no more so, the promise of life by it ceased; the sanction of it, death, took place; and he was no more in a capacity of yielding sinless obedience; and so could not procure life for himself and his; wherefore he no longer standing as a federal-head to his posterity, they had no more concern with his after-sins, than with his repentance and good works, both of which, no doubt, were performed by him; yet by his repentance they are not reckoned repenting sinners; nor are his good works accounted to them.

II. Who they are that are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam. They are said to be many; not only Adam and Eve, who were transgressors, and so became guilty and polluted sinners, through their disobedience, as they most certainly did; as appears from their consciousness of nakedness; from the shame and confusion of face that covered them; from the fear and dreadful apprehensions of the wrath and vengeance of God; and from their fleeing from his presence, and hiding themselves; but even all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation, were made sinners hereby; for though they are only said to be many, these many signify all; the reason of the use of this word, is to answer to the next clause, to the many that are made righteous by the obedience of one Man; and yet the many there, signify all that are in Christ, as their covenant-head; even all his spiritual seed and offspring, given to him and chosen in him: and so all the natural seed and offspring of Adam, to whom he stood as a federal-head, are all made sinners by his disobedience; which is thus strongly expressed, *As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that or in whom all have sinned*, Rom. v. 12. And again, *By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation*, v. 18. I say, all descending from him by ordinary generation, are made sinners by his sin and none else. Had God made more worlds than one, as he could if he would, and worlds of men too; yet as these would not have descended from Adam, they would have had no concern in his sin: had God raised up children to Abraham out of stones, which he could have done; yet such so raised up, in such a miraculous manner, and not descending from Adam, could not be affected with his sin; and for a like reason the human nature of Christ must be excepted from any concern in it, and from any effect of it, guilt, or pollution; for though he was partaker of the same human nature, of the same flesh and blood with other men, and made in all things like unto them yet not by ordinary generation; he was made of a woman, but not begotten by man; God, his Father, prepared a body for him in covenant; and in the fulness of time his nature was formed by the holy Spirit, in a wonderful manner; it was an extraordinary production; it was a new thing which God created in the earth, and so an holy thing; was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, without spot and blemish, and any consciousness of sin; and thus as it was clear of the taint and corruption of nature from Adam's sin, so it was exempt from the guilt of it; see Luke i. 34, 35. And besides that, Christ not descending from Adam by ordinary generation, could not be a federal-head to him on that account; so neither because of the dignity of his person; the human nature being personally united to the Son of God, could never be under a creature as its federal-head, or be represented by one. Moreover, Christ was the head of another and better covenant than Adam's, and was previous to it, even before Adam and his covenant were in being. Christ was an head to Adam, as he was chosen in him, given to him in covenant to be redeemed and saved by him; but Adam was no head to him; *The Head of Christ is God*, and he only, 1 Cor. xi. 3.

III. In what sense all Adam's posterity are made sinners by his disobedience. — Not by imitation, as say the Pelagians; men may become more sinful by imitation, but they do not at first become sinful by it: men may, by example, be drawn in to commit sin more frequently, and to commit greater ones; and therefore the company of wicked men is to be shunned, since *Evil communications corrupt good manners*; especially persons of power and authority, their examples have great weight and influence; as civil magistrates, ministers, parents, and masters. So Jeroboam caused Israel to sin, was the occasion of it, and drew them into it by his authority and example. But this cannot be the case here; for, — 1. Death, the effect of Adam's sin, and the punishment inflicted for it, takes place on such who never *sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*, Rom. v. 14. namely, infants dying in their infancy; who, though not without the corruption of nature in them, yet without any actual sin committed by them, like to that of Adam's transgression; dying so soon they have neither capacity nor opportunity of committing any sin similar to his; that is, any actual transgression; and therefore said, in that respect, to be innocent, Jer. xix. 4. not free from the taint, but from the act of sin. Now since death, which is the punishment of sin, takes place on them, that supposes guilt, or otherwise punishment could not in justice be inflicted on them; and as they are not made sinners by Adam's sin through imitation of it, they must become guilty, or be made sinners in some other way. — 2. Death the effect of Adam's sin, and the punishment of it, takes place on such who never heard of it, and consequently cannot be made sinners by it, through imitation of it; for death passes upon all men, all nations of the world, and all individuals in it, through the sin of one man, Adam; even on such who never heard of the law which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; nor, indeed, ever heard of the law of Moses, and the sins forbidden by that; are acquainted only with the law and light of nature; the law written in their hearts, according to which their minds consciences, and thoughts, accuse or excuse one another; and yet they that are without law, perish without law, being sinners; and therefore as they cannot be made sinners by Adam's sin, through imitation of it, they must be made so another way; see Rom. ii. 12—15. — 3. This sense makes a man no more a sinner by Adam's disobedience, than he is by the disobedience of his immediate parents, or any other whose ill examples he follows. Adam seems to be too remote an ancestor to imitate; more likely immediate parents; and yet this is not always the case; children do not always follow the examples of parents, bad or good. Some may have evil parents, and like the Jews, fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, and do as they did, and appear to be a generation of vipers: and others have good parents, who give them a religious education, and set them good examples, and yet they take very bad courses; and so not by imitation, at least of their parents. And, indeed, sin in general does not come by imitation; but it is from a corrupt nature; and there are many sins which are never seen committed, yet are committed by those who never saw them; as murder, acts of uncleanness, &c. Did Cain sin by imitation when he murdered his brother? Did Lot's daughters sin by imitation when they contrived to commit incest with their father, and did? It is possible that all these defects in nature may meet in one man, as to be born blind, deaf, and dumb; and so not capable of seeing and hearing, and knowing what sins are committed, and yet be as vicious as any of the sons of Adam.

Nor is the sense of the phrase, "made sinners by one man's disobedience," what the more modern Pelagians and Arminians give into; that by a metonymy of the effect, sin being put for the punishment of it, men become sufferers, or are obnoxious to death, and suffer death on the account of Adam's disobedience; but this is to depart from the common and constant sense of this word, sinners. Nor can any instance be given of the apostle's use of the word in this sense, either in the context or elsewhere; it always signifying a sinful, guilty, and defiled creature; one that is guilty of a crime, and obnoxious to death for it; it is contrary to the apostle's scope and design in the context, which was to shew how death came into the world, namely, by sin; and to the distinction he all along makes between sin and death; the one he represents as the cause, the other as the effect; whereas this sense confounds cause and effect, sin and death, together; and makes the apostle guilty of such bad reasoning as can never be charged upon him, and which a man of such large reasoning powers, abstracted from his being an inspired writer, could never be capable of; for then the sense of these words, 12. *Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*, must be, death passed upon all men, because it has passed upon all men; or all men are obnoxious to death, and suffer it, because they are obnoxious to it, and suffer it. Besides, it is granting us too much for themselves; it makes their cause indefensible, and even destroys it, and cuts the the throat of it; or if men are obnoxious to death, even though but a corporal death, which is what they mean, and suffer such a death on the account of Adam's sin, they must have a concern in it, and be, in some way or other, guilty of it; or such a punishment, in justice, could not be inflicted on them. What greater punishment is there among men, for the most enormous crime, than death? And why should men suffer death for Adam's sin, of which they are in no sense guilty? Let this be reconciled, if it can be, to the justice of God.

Nor is the sense of the phrase, "made sinners by one man's disobedience," that Adam's posterity derive a corrupt nature from him, through his sin; this is indeed a truth, but not the truth of this passage; it is true that all men are made of one man's blood, and that blood tainted with sin; and so a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; what is born of the flesh is flesh, carnal and corrupt; every man is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, as David was; but then there is a difference between being made sinners, and becoming sinful, the one respects the guilt, the other the pollution of nature; the one is previous to the other, and the foundation of it; men receive a corrupt nature from their immediate parents; but they are not made sinners by any act or acts of their disobedience. Wherefore, it remains that the posterity of Adam are only made sinners through the imputation of his disobedience to them. And this imputation is not to be considered in a moral sense, as the action of a man committed by himself, whether good or bad, is adjudged and reckoned unto him as his own, whether in a way of praise or dispraise; as the zealous good work of Phinehas in slaying two persons in the very act of sin, was counted unto him for righteousness; that is, was judged, reckoned and esteemed a righteous;

worthy, and commendable action; but in a forensic, judicial, and law-sense; as when one man's debts are in a legal way placed to the account of another, as if they were his, though not personally contracted by him. An instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who said to Philemon, concerning Onesimus; if he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee any thing, *ελλογει*, let it be imputed to me, or placed to, and put on my account. And thus the posterity of Adam, are made sinners by Adam's disobedience, that being imputed to them, and put to their account, as if it had been committed by them personally, though it was not. And this sense is to be confirmed and illustrated, — 1. From the signification of the word here used, *κατεςαθησαν*, constituted in a judicial way, ordered and appointed in the dispensation of things, that so it should be; just as Christ was made sin, or a sinner by imputation, by the constitution of God, laying upon him, reckoning, placing to his account the sins of all his people, and dealing with him as though he was the guilty person, and as if he had committed the sins, though he had not; and not imputing trespasses to them, though they were the actual transgressors. — 2. From its being the disobedience of another, by which men are made sinners; and therefore they can in no other way be made sinners by it; than by the imputation of it to them; just as the righteousness of Christ being not our own, but his, another's; we cannot be made righteous by it, but by the imputation of it to us. — 3. From the punishment inflicted on persons for it. The punishment threatened to Adam in case of disobedience to the law and will of God, was death, Gen. ii. 17. which includes death, corporal, moral, and eternal; a corporal death has been taken notice of already, and which is allowed to be suffered on account of the sin of Adam; and if so there must be a guilt; and that guilt must be made over to the sufferer; and which can be done in no other way than by the imputation of it. A moral death is no other than the loss of the image of God in man, which consisted in righteousness and holiness, and particularly it is a loss of original righteousness; in the room of which succeeded unrighteousness and unholiness; and is both a sin, and a punishment for sin; it is a sin as it has malignity in it, and a punishment for sin; and so it was threatened to Adam, and came upon him as such; and so to all his posterity, by the ordination and appointment of God; for which there can be no other foundation but the imputation of Adam's disobedience to them; nor can any thing else vindicate the righteousness of God; for if the law of nature was sufficient, why should this original taint infect men, rather than the sins of immediate parents? Now if this comes upon men as a punishment, it supposes preceding sin; and what can that be but Adam's disobedience, the guilt of which must be made over to Adam's posterity, or it could not in justice take place: and that could no other way be made over to them but by imputation. And if eternal death is taken in to the punishment, as it must be; for the wages of sin is death, even death eternal; and this can never be inflicted on guiltless persons; if men are thus punished for Adam's sin, the guilt of that sin must be imputed to them: in Rom. v. 18. it is said, *By the offence of one, judg-*

ment came upon all men to condemnation; that is, the righteous sentence of God passed upon the whole posterity of Adam, to the condemnation of them for his offence; be that condemnation to a corporal, or to a moral, or to an eternal death, to any or all of them, it supposes them guilty of that offence, and that the guilt of that offence is made over to them, and reckoned as theirs; which can only be done by imputation; or they cannot be righteously condemned and punished for it in either sense. — 4. That this is the sense of the clause, *made sinners by the disobedience of one*, appears from the opposite clause; *So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous:* now the many ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ died, and whom he justified, are made righteous, or are justified only through the imputation of his righteousness to them; and he is made sin by the imputation of their sins to him, 2 Cor. v. 21. In like manner are Adam's posterity, or all men, made sinners through the imputation of his disobedience to them. And this is the sense of this clause, notwithstanding what may be objected to it.

It is no objection, that Adam's disobedience or sin is not now in act; as soon as it was committed as an act, it ceased; and therefore not to be imputed. The same may be objected to the obedience of Christ; or rather a course of obedience, a series of actions, which when performed, ceased to be in act; but then the righteousness arising from them continues; and is in Christ, The Lord our Righteousness; and is unto all and upon all that believe. And so Adam's sin, though it ceased to be in act, the guilt of it continues, and is imputed to all his posterity. In like manner the sins of the saints, before the coming of Christ, ceased to be in act as soon as committed; and yet Chrst died for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament, and the sins of all the people of God were laid upon him by imputation. Nor is it any objection to this truth, that Adam's posterity were not in being when his disobedience was committed, and so could have no concern in it: but though they had not an actual being, yet they had a virtual and representative one; they were in him both seminally and federally; and *sinned in him* too, Rom. v. 12. as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, and paid tithes to Melchizedek, Heb. vii. 9, 10. I say, both seminally and federally; and it is their being in him seminally that is the foundation of their being in him federally, and makes it reasonable that so they should be: and this may be greatly illustrated and confirmed by modern philosophy, according to which all kinds of plants of the same sort to be produced in all following ages, were actually formed in the first seed that was created; and that all the *stamina* and *semina*, not only of plants but of animals, and so of men, were originally formed by the almighty Parent, within the first of each respective kind, and to be the seed of all future generation: thus all mankind being formed in the first man, and in this manner, it easily accounts for it, how they came to have a share in the guilt of his sin; and that to be imputed to them, as also to have the corruption and pollution of it derived to them. Nor does this act of imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, make God the author of sin;

since this act makes men sinners not inherently, but imputatively; it puts no sin in them, though it reckons sin to them; and though this imputation is God's act, it makes him no more the author of sin, than the imputation of Christ's obedience, makes God the author of that obedience; as not God, but Christ, is the author of the obedience imputed; so not God, but Adam, is the author of that disobedience imputed to his posterity; nor is this doctrine chargeable with cruelty and injustice; it has never been reckoned either, that children should suffer for the sins of their parents; or rather, that parents should be punished in their children; God describes himself as a God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him; and yet it is impossible that he should be guilty either of a cruel or unjust action: when Achan sinned, his sons and his daughters, and all that he had, were ordered to be brought forth, and they were all burnt with him. The Amalekites, for the injury they did to Israel, when they first came out of Egypt, Saul had orders, some hundreds of years after, to go and smite them, and utterly destroy all they had, men and women, infants and sucklings, and all their cattle; the blood of all the righteous persons that had been shed from the beginning of the world to the times of Christ, was then avenged on the wicked Jews. And such a procedure in subjecting children to penalties for the sins of their parents, is justified by the laws, customs, and usages of all nations, who make treason punishable in the posterity of men. A nobleman, when he commits treason against his sovereign, he is not only stripped of his titles, honour and estates himself, but his children are also, and reduced to poverty and misery, until the attainder is taken off. And if treason against an earthly king is punishable in this manner then much more treason against the King of kings, and Lord of Lords, as Adam's sin was.

The text in Ezek. xviii. 2—4. is not to the purpose; that the proverb, *The father's have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*, should be no more used in Israel, but the soul that sins should die; since this speaks not a word of Adam, and his sin, nor of his posterity suffering for it; nor even of such men that commit the same sins their fathers' have; but of good men and just men, that do not follow their fathers evil ways, and so shall not be punished for any sins of theirs, and is restrained to a certain case and time. The case of the man born blind, is also quite impertinent; since that also respects not Adam's sin, but the sin of the man and his parents, and a particular disaster, blindness. The disciples put this question to Christ upon it; *Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?* Christ's answer is, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*; not but that they had both sinned, but their sin was not the cause and reason of his blindness; but the sovereign will and pleasure of God, *That the works of God should be made manifest in him*; that there might be an opportunity for Chrst to give proof of his Deity and Messiahship, by performing such a cure as was never heard of before John ix. 2.

To close this point; let it be observed, that the ground of the imputation of

Adam's sin to his posterity, is not his being the natural head, and common parent of them; for so are immediate parents to their respective offspring; but their particular sins are not imputed to them; Adam, being the common parent of mankind, may be considered as the ground of the derivation of a corrupt nature to them, and yet the justice of that will not clearly appear without their being considered as made sinners by the imputation of Adam's sin to them: but the ground of this imputation is the federal headship of Adam, or his standing as a covenant head to all his posterity; so that what he did as such, is reckoned as if done by them; which is not the case of immediate parents; and therefore their sins are not imputed: that Adam stood in the relation of a federal head to his posterity, has been proved in a former chapter, and vindicated from exceptions to it.

OF THE CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE.

HAVING proved the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity, what follows upon this is, the corruption of nature derived unto them from him; by which is meant, the general depravity of mankind, of all the individuals of human nature, and of all the powers and faculties of the soul, and members of the body.

I. I shall prove that there is such a depravity and corruption of mankind.

1. The heathens themselves have acknowledged and lamented it; they assert, that no man is born without sin[f]; that every man is naturally vicious[g]; that there is an evil disposition, or vicious affection, that is implanted and grows up in men[h]; and that there is a fatal portion of evil in all when born, from whence are the depravity of the soul, diseases, &c[i]. and that the cause of viciosity is rather from our first parents, and from first principles, than from ourselves[k]; and Cicero[l] particularly laments that men should be brought into life by nature as a step-mother, with a naked, frail and infirm body, and with a mind or soul prone to lusts. — 2. Revelation asserts it; the scriptures abound with testimonies of it, affirming that no man can be born pure and clean; that whatever is born of the flesh, or comes into the world by ordinary generation, is flesh, carnal, and corrupt; that all men, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin, under the guilt, pollution, and dominion of sin; that the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually; that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; and that out of it proceeds all that is vile and sinful, Job xiv. 4. John iii. 6. Rom. iii. 9. Gen. vi. 5. Jer. xvii. 9. Matt. xv. 19.

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[f] Which Plato calls κακοφυια, and defines it κακια εν φυσει, an evil in nature, Plato. Definitiones. Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur——Horat. Satyr. l. 1. satyr 3. v. 68.

[g] Unicuique dedit vitium natura creata, Propert. l. 2. eleg. 22. ver. 17.

[h] Laertius, l. 2. in vita Aristippi.

[i] Plutarch. de Consol. ad Apoll. vol. 2. p. 104.

[k] Timæus Locrus de Natura Mundi, p. 21.

[l] De Republica, l. 3. apud August. contr. Julian, l. 4. c. 12.

— 3. Reason confirms it, that so it must be; that if a tree is corrupt, it can bring forth no other than corrupt fruit; that if the root of mankind is unholy, the branches must be so too; if the fountain is impure, the streams must be so likewise; if immediate parents are unclean, their posterity must be unclean, since a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; and if God has made of one man's blood all nations that are upon the face of the earth, and that blood is tainted with sin, all that proceed from him by ordinary generation must have the same taint. — 4. All experience testifies the truth of this; no man was ever born into the world without sin; no one has ever been exempt from this contagion and defilement of nature, *there is none that doeth good, no not one* Rom. iii. 10. that does good naturally and of himself; the reason is, because there is none by nature good; of all the millions of men that have proceeded from Adam by ordinary generation, not one has been found without sin; there is but one individual of human nature that can be mentioned as an exception to this, and that is the human nature of Christ; and that is excepted because of its wonderful production, and did not descend from Adam by ordinary generation. — 5. The necessity of redemption by Christ, and of regeneration by the Spirit of Christ, shews that men must be in a corrupt state, or there would have been no need of these. The redemption of men from sin, and from a vain conversation, supposes them to be under the power of sin, and the influence of it, to lead a vain sinful life; and if men were free from the pollution of sin, the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin would have been unnecessary; his being made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption to them, implies that they were foolish and unwise, and they were unrighteous and unholy, and slaves to sin and Satan: regeneration and sanctification are absolutely necessary to a man's enjoyment of eternal happiness; *except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*; and *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, John iii. 3. Heb. xii. 14. but what occasion would there have been for man's being born again, or having a new or supernatural birth, if he was not defiled by his first and natural birth; or of being sanctified, if he was not unholy and unclean.

II. The names by which this corruption of nature is expressed in scripture deserve notice, since they not only serve to give more light into the nature of it, but also to confirm it; it is often called sin itself, being a want of conformity to the law of God, and contrary to it; it is represented as very active, working all manner of concupiscence, and death itself; deceiving, slaying, killing, and as exceeding sinful, even to an hyperbole, being big with all sin, and the source of all, Rom. vii. 8, &c. It has the name of indwelling sin; the apostle speaks of it as such with respect to himself, *sin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. vii. 17. it is not what comes and goes, or is only a visitor now and then, but an inhabitant, and a very troublesome one; it hinders all the good, and does all the evil it can; and it abides, and will abide, as long as men are in this tabernacle, the body; and even in the saints, until the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved; it is like the spreading leprosy in the house, which was not to be cured until the house was pulled down, and the stones and timber carried into an unclean place: so the tabernacle of the body will not be rid of the corruption of nature, until it is unpinned and taken down, and carried to the grave. It is said to be the law of sin, and a law in the members; which has force, power, and authority with it; it reigns like a king; yea, rather as a tyrant; for it reigns unto death, unless grace prevents it; it enacts laws, and requires obedience to them; and obedience is yielded to the lusts of it; men serve divers lusts and pleasures, Rom. vii. 23. Sometimes it is called the body of sin, because it consists of various parts and members, as a body does; it is an aggregate, or an assemblage of sins, and includes all in it, Rom. vi. 6. Sometimes it goes by the name of the old man, because it is the effect of the poison of the old serpent; it is near as old as the first man; and is as old as every man in whom it is; it exists as early as man himself does, Eph. iv. 22. Very often it is called flesh, because it is propagated by the flesh, and is carnal and corrupt, and is opposed to the spirit or principle of grace, which is from the Spirit of God; and in which no good thing, nothing that is spiritual, dwells. Once more, it is named lust or concupiscence; which is sin itself, and the mother of all sin; it consists of various branches, called fleshly lusts, and worldly lusts, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, The Jews commonly call it, the evil figment, or imagination.

III. This corruption of nature is universal.

1. With respect to the individuals of mankind. Our first parents were, and all descending from them by ordinary generation are tainted with it. This corruption, immediately upon the sin of our first parents, took place in them; as appears from the shame, confusion, and fear they were at once filled with; from their gross stupidity and folly, in thinking to hide themselves from God among the trees of the garden, from their attempts to conceal, palliate, and excuse their sin, the woman by laying the blame on the serpent, the man on the woman, and ultimately on God himself. Their immediate offspring took the contagion from them; the first man born into the world, Cain, the corruption of nature soon appeared in him, in his wrathful and envious countenance, when his brother's sacrifice was preferred to his; nor could he be easy until he he had shed his brother's blood, which he did: and though Abel is called righteous Abel, as he was, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and on account of the new man created in him unto righteousness and true holiness; in consequence of which he lived soberly and righteously; yet he was not without sin; or otherwise, why did he offer sacrifice, and by faith looked to the sacrifice of Christ, which was to be offered up to make atonement for his sins, and those of others? In the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, God raised up another seed to Adam, whom he begot in his own likeness, after his image; not in the likeness and image of God, in which Adam was created;

but in that which he had brought upon himself, through his sin and fall: the posterity of this man, and of Cain, peopled and filled the whole world before the flood. And what is the account that is given of them? It is this, that the earth was corrupt through them; that all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth; and that only one man found grace in the sight of God; and that the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, Gen. iv. 25. And as for the inhabitants of the new world, who sprung from Noah and his three sons, who descended in a right line from Seth, much the same is said of them, Gen. viii. 21. In short, all nations of the earth, which may be divided into Jews and Gentiles, and which include the whole, are all under sin, under the guilt and pollution of it; not the Gentiles only, whose times of ignorance God winked at, and whom he suffered to walk in their own ways, which were sinful ones; but even the people of Israel, whom God chose to be a special and peculiar people, these were always rebellious, from the time they were a people; all the while Moses was with them; in the times of the Judges; and when under the government of Kings; as their several captivities testify; they were a seed of evil doers, a people laden with iniquity: in every age or period of time, whenever God took a survey of the state and condition of mankind, this was the sum of the account; *They are corrupt, &c.* Psal. xiv. 1—3. see Rom. iii. 9—12. The contentions, quarrels, and wars which have been in the world, in all ages, are a strong, constant, and continued proof of the depravity of human nature; *for these come of lusts that war in the members*, James iv. 1. which, as it is true of the war between flesh and spirit in the soul; and of the animosities and contentions among professors of religion; so of wars among nations, in a civil sense; and which have been from the beginning, and still continue: a quarrel there was between the two first men that were born into the world, which issued in bloodshed; and as soon as kingdoms and states were formed, and kings over them, we hear of wars between them. Look over the histories of all ages, and of all nations in them, and you will find them full of accounts of these things; all which have risen from the pride, ambition, and lusts of men. Yea, this depravity and corruption of nature has appeared, not only among the men of the world in all ages, but even among the people of God, and after they have been called by grace: there never was a just man that did good, and sinned not; in many things, in all things they sin and offend; in them, that is, in their flesh, their corrupt part, no good thing dwells: such that say they have no sin, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.

II. This corruption of nature is general, with respect to the parts of man, to all the powers and faculties of his soul, and to the members of his body. — 1. To the powers and faculties of the soul of man, to all that is within him; his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; his inward part is wickedness itself; the thoughts of his heart are evil, vain, and sinful; yea, the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, the very substratum of thought, the first motions that are in man that way; the mind and conscience, are defiled, and nothing can remove the pollution but the blood of Jesus; the understanding is darkened through the blindness and ignorance that is in it; so that a mere natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God; whatever knowledge men have of things natural and civil, they have none of things spiritual: wise they are to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge; they know not, nor will they understand: the will is averse to that which is good; the carnal mind is enmity to God, and not subject to the law of God; nor can it be, without his grace; it is hard, stiff, obstinate, and perverse, until the stony heart is taken away, and a heart of flesh is given. The affections are inordinate, run in a wrong channel, are fixed on wrong objects; men hate what they should love, and love what they should hate; they hate the good, and love the evil; they are lovers of pleasures, of sinful lusts and pleasures, rather than lovers of God, good men, and good things. In short, there is no place clean, no part free from the pollution and influence of sin. → 2. All the members of the body are defiled with it; the tongue is a little member, and is a world of iniquity itself, and defiles the whole body; the several members of it are used as instruments of unrighteousness; several of them are particularly mentioned in the general account of man's depravity, Rom. iii. as the throat, lips, mouth, and feet, all employed in the service of sin.

IV. The time when the corruption of nature takes place in man; the lowest date of it is his youth; *The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth,* Gen. viii. 21. that is, as soon as he is capable of exercising his reason, and of committing actual sin; and which, at this age, chiefly appears in lying and disobedience to parents; and this is said, not of some particular men, or of some individuals, but of men in general; and not only as in the times of Noah, but in all succeeding generations to the end of the world. This depravity of nature is in some passages carried up higher, even to man's birth; *The wicked are estranged from the womb*; that is, from God, alienated from the life of God; being under the power of a moral death, or being dead in trespasses and sins; *They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies,* Psal. lviii. 3. that is, as soon as they are capable of speaking: and the sin of lying, children are very early addicted to; and this is said, not only of such who in the event turn out very wicked, profligate and abandoned sinners, but even such as are born of religious parents, have a religious education, and become religious themselves, are *called transgressors from the womb,* Isai. xlviii. 8. that is, as soon as capable of committing actual trangression. David carries the pollution of his nature still higher, when he says; *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me,* Psal. li. 5. which he observes, not to extenuate, but rather to aggravate, his actual transgression he was confessing, in that he had been so early and so long sinful; and that whereas he was not ignorant of the corruption of his nature, and how prone he was to sin that he should be no more upon his guard against it. He does not say, my sin, and my iniquity, though it was his, being in his nature; but sin and iniquity, being what was common to him with the rest of mankind; and what had attended him at the formation of him in the womb, and so before he could commit any actual sin; and therefore must design the original corruption of his nature; and that as soon as the soul and body were united together he was a sinful creature. To this sense of the words it is objected, that David speaks only of his mother's sin; and broad hints are given that her sin was the sin of adultery. This shews how much the advocates for the purity of human nature are pinched with this passage, to betake themselves to such an interpretation of it, at the expence of the character of an innocent person, of whom nothing of this kind is suggested in the sacred writings; but, on the contrary, that she was a pious and religious person; David valued himself upon his relation to her, and pleads to be regarded for her sake, Psal. lxxxvi. 16. Besides, if this had been the case, David would have been illegitimate; and by a law in Israel, would have been forbid entering into the congregation of the Lord, and could not have bore any office in church or state; nor did it answer the scope and design of David, to expose the sins of others, especially his own parents, whilst he is confessing and lamenting his own; nor does the particle *in* belong to his mother, but to himself; the sense is not, that his mother being in sin or that she in and through sin conceived him; but that he was conceived being in sin, or that as soon as the mass of human nature was shaped and formed in him, and soul and body were united together, he was in sin, and sin in him: or he became a sinful creature. Some who do not go the above lengths, yet suppose that the sin of his immediate parents, in begetting and conceiving him, though in lawful wedlock, is meant; but this cannot be; since the propagation of the human species by generation, is a principle implanted in nature by God himself, and so not sinful. It was the first law of nature, *Increase and multiply*; given in the state of innocence. Marriage was instituted in Paradise, and has been always esteemed honourable when the bed is undefiled. Besides, one of the words used, translated shapen, is in the passive form, and respects what neither David nor his parents could be active in; and the whole refers to the amazing work of his formation, which he so much admires, Psal. cxxxix. 14, 16. It is objected by others, that he goes no higher than his mother; and takes no notice of Adam. Nor was there any need of it; for since the corruption of nature goes in the channel of generation, he had no occasion, in speaking of that, to take notice of any other but his immediate parents, through whom it was conveyed to him: it is further urged, that David speaks not of other men, only of himself. But that all mankind are corrupted in the same manner, other passages are full and express for it, Job. xiv. 4. John iii. 6. Psal. lviii. 3. Eph. ii. 3. And if David, a man so famous for early piety and religion, one after God's own heart, whom he raised up to fulfil his will, was tainted with sin in his original formation, then surely the same must be true of all others; who, after him, can rise up and say, it was not so with him? Lastly, some will have these words to be figurative and hyperbolical, and only mean, that he had often sinned from his youth: but men, in confessing sin, do not usually exaggerate it, but declare it plainly, ingenuously, just as it is; and, indeed, the sinfulness of nature, cannot well be hyperbolized; and, if such a figure was attempted, it might be allowed of, without lowering it.

V. The way and manner in which the corruption of nature is conveyed to men, as to become sinful by it. — 1. It cannot be of God, or by infusion from him; he is of purer eyes than to behold it; he has no pleasure in it; it is abominable to him, and therefore would never infuse and implant it in the nature of men. Some of the ancient heretics fancied, there were two first principles, or beings; the one good, and the other evil; and that all that is good comes from the one; and all that is evil from the other: but this is to make two first causes, and so two gods; and those diametrically opposite to each other. — 2. Nor can it be by imitation of parents, either first or immediate; there are some who never sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, and yet die; which they would not, were they not guilty and polluted; there are many born into the world who never knew their immediate parents, and therefore could not imitate them. Some their fathers die before they are born; and some lose both parents before capable of imitation; and if the taint is at their formation, and before their birth, it is impossible to be by imitation. — 3. Nor does this come to pass through souls being in a pre-existent state. Some of the heathen philosophers, as Pythagoras and Plato, held a pre-existence of souls before the world was; and which notion was adopted by Origen, who held, that souls in this pre-existent state, sinned each separately for themselves; and for their sins, were thrust in time into human bodies, or into others, in which they suffer. Some think this notion was embraced by some of the Jews in Christ's time, and even by some of his followers; as is urged from John ix. 1—3. but then it is not allowed of by him. And some modern chrisitans have imbibed the same Heathenish and Jewish notion; who, observing that some passages of scripture speak of the pre-existence of Christ, in his divine nature, or as a divine Person, have interpreted them of the pre-existence of his human soul; and have proceeded to assert the pre-existence of all souls, but without any colour of reason or scripture-authority. — 4. Nor is this to be accounted for by the traduction of the soul from immediate parents; or by the generation of it, together with the body, from them. Could this indeed be established, it would greatly remove the difficulty which attends the doctrine of the propagation of the corruption of nature by natural generation; hence Austin was once inclined to it on this account; but it is so big with absurdities, as has been seen in preceding chapter, that it cannot be admitted; as, that spirit is educed out of matter, and generated from it, and therefore must be material, corruptible and mortal; for whatever is generated is corruptible, and consequently the soul is not immortal; a doctrine never to be given up: and, besides, according to the scriptures, the soul is immediately created by God. That this corruption of nature is conveyed by generation, seems certain; see John iii. 6. for since nature is conveyed in that way, the sin of nature also must come in like manner. But how to account for this, consistent with the justice, holiness, and goodness of God, is a difficulty, and is one of the greatest difficulties in the whole scheme of divine truths; wherefore some have thought it more advisable to sit down and lament this corruption, and consider how we must be delivered from it, than to enquire curiously in what way and manner it comes into us; as a man that is fallen into a pit, does not so much concern himself how he came into it, as how to get out of it, and to be cleansed from the filth he has contracted in it. But a sober enquiry into this matter, with a due regard to the perfections of God, the sacred scriptures, and the analogy of faith, may be both lawful and laudable. The difficulty is chiefly occasioned by the manner in which the case is put; as, that a soul that comes pure and holy out of the hand of God, should be united to a sinful body, and be defiled by it; but if it can be made out, that neither of these is the fact, that the body is not properly and formally sinful, when the soul is first united to it, nor the soul pure and holy when created by God; that is, not in such sense as the soul of Adam was when created; the difficulty will be greatly lessened, if not entirely removed.

1. Let it be observed then, that the contagion of sin does not take place on the body apart, nor on the soul apart; but upon both when united together, and not before: it was not the body apart in the substance of Adam's flesh that sinned; nor was the soul apart represented by him; but both as in union, and as one man, one person; for not bodies and souls separately, but men, were considered in Adam, and sinned in him, and so as the imputation of the guilt of his sin is not made to the body apart, nor to the soul apart, but to both as united; when, and not before, it becomes a son of Adam, a member of him; so the corruption of nature, derived from him, takes place on neither apart, but upon them as united together, and constituted man. The body, antecedent to its union to a rational soul, is no other than a brute, an animal, like other animals; and is not a subject either of moral good or moral evil; as it comes from a corrupt body, and is of a corruptible seed, it has in it the seeds of many evils, as other animals have, according to their nature; but then these are natural evils, not moral ones; as the savageness, fierceness, and cruelty of lions, bears, wolves, &c. But when this body comes to be united to a rational soul, it becomes then a part of a rational creature, it comes under a law, and its nature not being conformable to that law, its nature, and the evils, viciosities of it, are formally sinful. It has before a disposition, an aptitude to what is sinful; and contains fit fuel for sin, which its vicious lusts and appetites kindle, when these become formally sinful, through its becoming a part of a rational creature; and these increasing, operate upon, and gradually defile the soul. Should it be said, that matter cannot operate on spirit; this may be sooner said than proved. How easy is it to observe, that when our bodies are indisposed through diseases and pain, what an effect this has upon our minds; from the temperament and constitution of the body, many incommodities and disadvantages

arise unto the soul: persons that have much of the *atra bilis*, or black choler in them, a melancholy and bodily disorder, what a gloominess does it throw upon the mind? and to what passion, anger and wrath, are men of a sanguine complexion subject? and to what is insanity owing, but to a disorder in the brain? and to a defect there must it be attributed, that some are ideots, and others of very mean capacities, and very short memories; and where the bodily organs are not well attempered and accommodated, the soul is cramped, and cannot duly perform its functions and offices; and a man must be inattentive to himself, if he does not observe, that as by thoughts in the mind motions are excited in the body, whether sinful, civil, or religious; so motions of the body are often the means and occasion of exciting thoughts in the mind.

11. It is not fact that souls are now created by God pure and holy; that is, as Adam's soul was created, with original righteousness and purity; with a propensity to that which is good, and with power to do it. But they are created with a want of original righteousness and holiness; without a propensity to good, and without power to perform; and a reason will be given presently, why it is so; and why it should be so. And such a creation may be conceived of, without any imputation of unrighteousnes to God, and without making him the author of sin. It may be conceived of without any injury to the perfections of God; as, that he may create a soul in its pure essence, with all its natural powers and properties, without any qualities of moral purity or impurity, holiness or unholiness; or that he may create one with a want of righteousness, and with an impotence to good, and without any propensity to it; since by so dong he does not put any sinfulness into the soul, nor any inclination to sin. And that the souls of men should be now so created, it is but just and equitable, as will appear by the following considerations: Adam's original righteousness was not personal, but the righteousness of his nature; he had it not as a private single person, but as a public head, as the root, origin, and parent of mankind; so that had he stood in his integrity, it would have been conveyed to his posterity by natural generation; just as he having sinned, the corruption of nature is derived to them in the same way; what he had, he had not for himelf only, but for his posterity; and what he lost, he lost not for himself only, but for his posterity: and he sinned not as a single private person, but as the head, root, origin, and parent of all his offspring; they were all in him, and sinned in him as one man; so that it was but just that they should be deprived, as he, of the glory of God, that is, of the image of God, which chiefly lay in original righteousness, in an inclination to good, and a power to perform it; and, being stripped of this, or being devoid of it, an inclination to sin follows upon it, as soon as it offers; and in the room of it unrighteousness and unholiness take place; for, as Austin says, the loss of good, takes the name of evil; and this being the case, how easily may it be accounted for, that a soul without any fence or guard, wanting original righteousness, be gradually mastered and over-

come by the corrupt and sensual appetites of the body. And to all this agrees what a learned author[m] well observes, "God is to be considered by us, not as a Creator only, but also as a Judge; he is the Creator of the soul, as to its substance; in respect to which it is pure when created. Moreover, God is a Judge, when he creates a soul, as to this circumstance; namely, that not a soul simply is to be created by him; but a soul of one of the sons of Adam: in this respect it is just with him to desert the soul, as to his own image, lost in Adam; from which desertion follows a want of original righteousness; from which want, original sin, itself is propagated."

Should it be said, that though the justice and holiness of God are cleared from all imputation, in this way of considering things; yet it does not seem so agreeable to the goodness and kindness of God to create such a soul, and unite it to a body, in the plight and condition before described; since the natural consequence of it seems to be unavoidably the moral pollution of them both. To which may be replied, that God in this proceeds according to the original law of nature, fixed by himself; and which, according to the invariable course of things, appears to be this, with respect to the propagation of mankind: That when matter generated, is prepared for the reception of the soul; as soon as that preparation is finished; that very instant a soul is created, and ready at hand to be united to it, and it is. Now the law for the propagation of mankind by natural generation, was given to Adam in a state of innocence, and as soon as created, *Increase and multiply*; he after this corrupted and defiled the whole frame of his nature, and that of all his posterity. Is it reasonable now, that because man has departed from his obedience to the law of God, that God should depart from his original law, respecting man's generation? It is not reasonable he should, nor does he, nor will he depart from it: this appears from cases, in which, if in any, he could be thought to do so; as in the case of insanity, which infects a man's blood and family, and becomes a family-disorder; and yet to put a stop to this God does not depart from the order of things fixed by him; and so in the case of such who are unlawfully begotten, in adultery or fornication; when what is generated is fit to receive the soul, there is one prepared and united to it. And sometimes in this way God brings into the world some that belong to the election of grace; one of our Lord's ancestors came into the world in this way, Gen. xxxviii. 29. Matt. i. 3. What if Adam eats the forbidden fruit, and men drink water out of another's cistern, stolen waters, which are sweet unto them, and thereby transgress the law of God; must he forsake his own stated law and order of things? No; nature itself does not do so: a man steals a quantity of wheat, and sows it in his field; nature proceeds according to its own laws, fixed by the God of nature; the earth receives the seed, though stolen, into its bosom, cherishes it, and throws it out again, and a plentiful crop is produced. And shall nature act its part, and not the God of nature? He will; and the rather he will go on in his constant course, that the sin of

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[m] Sandford or Parker de Descensu Christi ad inferos, l. 3. s. 63. p. 121, 122.

en might be manifest, and that sin be his punishment. And in this light, in-
ed, we are to consider the corruption of nature; a moral death, which is no
her than a deprivation of the image of God, a loss of original righteousness,
d an incapacity to attain to it, was threatened to Adam, and inflicted on him
a punishment. And since all his posterity sinned in him, why should not
e same pass upon them? and, indeed, it is by the just ordination of God, that
ings are as they be, in consequence of Adam's sin, who cannot do an unjust
ing; there is no unrighteousness in him; he is righteous in all his ways, and
ly in all his works; and so in this. And here we should rest the matter; in
is we should acquiesce; and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

OF ACTUAL SINS AND TRANSGRESSIONS.

ROM the sin of Adam arises the corruption of nature, with which all man-
nd, descending from him by ordinary generation, are infected; and from the
rruption of nature, or indwelling sin, arise many actual sins and iniquities;
hich are called in scripture, The works of the flesh, or corrupt nature, in dis-
iction from the fruits of the Spirit, or inward principles of grace and holiness;
hese are the same with the *lusts of the flesh*, and *the desires* or *wills of the flesh*,
ph. ii. 3. The internal sinful actings of the mind and will; even all manner
concupiscence, which lust, or corrupt nature works in men, and which war
ainst the soul: they are called sometimes, the deeds of the body, of the body
sin; which, through the Spirit, are mortified, weakened, kept under, so as not
be frequently committed, and be a course of sinning, Rom. viii. 13. And
metimes, the deeds of the old man, the old principle of corrupt nature, to be
it off, with respect to the outward conversation, and not be governed by the
ctates of it, Col. iii. 9. Sometimes they are represented by corrupt fruit,
ought forth by a corrupt tree; such is man's sinful heart and nature, and
ch the acts that spring from it: if the tree is not good, good fruit will not
ow upon it: the heart must be made good ere good works can be done by
en, Matt. vii. 16—20. Those actual sins are the birth of corrupt nature,
hich is like a woman that conceives, bears, and brings forth; *When*
it hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, James i. 15. Corrupt nature is the
untain, and actual sins, whether internal or external, are the streams that
ow from it; *Out of the heart*, as from a fountain, *proceed evil thoughts, &c.*
latt. xv. 19. as is the spring, so are the streams; if water at the fountain-head,
bitter, so are the streams; Doth a fountain send forth at the same place,
veet water and bitter? No.

Actual sins are deviations from the law of God; for *sin is the transgression of*
e law, 1 John iii. 4. Actions, as natural actions, are not sinful; for all actions,
motions, are from God, the first Cause; from whom nothing sinful comes;
eatures depend on him in acting, as well as in subsisting; *In him we move*; or

otherwise they would be dependent of him; whereas, *all things are of him*. But an action is denominated good or bad, from its agreement or disagreement with the law of God, its conformity or disconformity to it; it is the irregularity, obliquity, and aberration of the action from the rule of the divine law, that is sin; and this whether in thought, word, or deed; for actual sins are not to be restrained to outward actions, performed by the members of the body, as instruments of unrighteousness; but include the sinful actings of the mind, evil thoughts, carnal desires, the lusts of the heart, heresies, errors in the mind, false opinions of things, and envyings, are reckoned among the *works of the flesh*, Gal. v. 20. And when we distinguish actual sins from original sin, we do not mean thereby that original sin is not actual. The first sins of Adam and Eve were actual sins, transgressions of the law of God; Eve was in the transgression; that is, guilty of an act of transaction; and we read of Adam's transgression, which designs the first sin he committed. And original sin, as derived from the sin of our first parents, is also actual; it is a want of conformity to the law of God, and is very active and operative; as it dwells in men, it works in them all manner of concupiscence; it hinders all the good, and puts upon doing all the evil it can; and is itself exceeding sinful. But actual sins are second acts, that flow from the corruption of nature. My business is not now to enlarge on particular sins, by explaining the nature, and shewing the evil of them; which more properly belongs to another part of my scheme that is to follow, even Practical Divinity. I shall therefore only treat of actual sins very briefly, in a doctrinal way, by giving the distribution of sins into their various sorts and kinds, reducing them to proper classes, and ranging them under their respective heads.

I. With respect to the object of sin, it may be distinguished into sins against God; sins against others, our neighbours, friends, and those in connection with us; and against ourselves; for which distinction there seems to be some foundation in 1 Sam. ii. 25. *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?* — 1. There are some sins that are more immediately and directly against God; all sin, indeed, is ultimately against him, being contrary to his nature and will; a transgression of his law; a contempt and neglect, and, indeed, a tacit denial of his legislative power and authority; who is that Lawgiver that is able to save and destroy. The sins of David against Uriah, are confessed by him to be against the Lord, *Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned*, Psal. li. 4. But there are some sins more particularly pointed at him, committed against him, in an open, bold, and audacious manner; *Their tongues and their doings are against the Lord*, Isai. iii. 8. Such are they as Eliphaz describes, who *stretch out their hands against God*, Job xv. 25, 26. their carnal minds being enmity against God. Particularly sins against the first table of the law, are sins against God; such as atheism in theory and in practice; which is, a denying that there is a God, and strikes at the very Being of him; blasphemy of his name, his perfections and providences; which is one of the things that proceed from the evil heart of man: Idolatry, having other gods before him, and serving the creature besides the Creator; bowing down to, and worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone: to which may be added, sensuality, voluptuousness, making the belly a god, and covetousness, which is idolatry: Taking the name of God in vain, using it on trifling occasions, and in a light and irreverent manner; cursing fellow-creatures in the name of God, and swearing falsely by it, which is perjury: Want of love to God, and of fear of him; having no regard to his worship, private and public; a profanation of the day of worship, and a neglect of the ordinances of divine service. — 2. Sins against others, are the violations of the second table of the law; as disobedience to parents; not giving that honour, shewing that reverence and respect, and paying that regard to their commands that ought to be: to which head may be reduced, disobedience to all superiors; the king as supreme, the father of his country; subordinate magistrates; ministers of the word; masters, &c. Murder, or the taking away of the life of another, is a sin against the sixth Command, as the former are against the fifth; of this there are divers sorts; as parricide, fratricide, &c. which last is the first actual sin we read of after the sin of our first parents; it seems as if the sin of murder greatly abounded in the old world, since at the beginning of the new, a special law respecting it was made; *Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed*, Gen. ix. 6. All sins of unchastity, in thoughts, and by obscene words and filthy actions, are violations of the seventh Command, which forbids adultery, fornication, incest, and all unnatural lusts: Taking away a man's property, privately or publicly, by force or fraud, by false accusations, and by circumventing and overreaching in trade and business, are breaches of the eighth command; and not only doing injury to the persons and properties of others, but to their good name, credit and reputation, comes under the name of actual sins against others; for taking away a man's good name is as bad as taking away his money, and is next to taking away his life. — 3. There are sins against a man's self; the apostle reckons fornication as sinning against a man's own body, 1 Cor. vi. 18. what is a pollution of it, brings dishonour upon it, fills it with nauseous diseases, and weakens the strength of it. Drunkenness is another sin against a man's self; it is what deprives him of the exercise of his reason, impairs his health, wastes his time, his substance, and at last his body. Suicide is a sin against a first principle of nature, self-preservation. The Stoics applaud it as an heroic action; but it is a base, mean, and cowardly one; and betrays want of fortitude of mind to bear up under present adversity, and to meet what is thought to be coming on. However, no man has a right to dispose of his own life; God is the giver, or rather lender, of it, and he only has a right to take it away.

II. With respect to the subject of sin, it may be distinguished into internal and external; sins of heart, lip and life; or of thought, word and action. — 1. Internal sins, sins of the heart; the plague of sin begins there, that is the seat of it; it is desperately wicked, it is wickedness itself; and out of it all manner of sin flows; the thoughts of it are evil, they are abominable to God, and very distressing to good men, who hate vain thoughts; the very thought of foolishness or wickedness is sin. The imagination of the thoughts of the heart is evil continually; the very substratum of thought, the motions of sin in the mind, work to bring forth fruit unto death; the desires and lusts of the mind are carnal and sinful, which are various; the lust of uncleanness in the heart; the lust of passion, wrath and revenge; the lust of envy, which the object of it cannot stand before, and which slays the subject of it; the lusts of ambition and pride; and which are thus summed up by the apostle, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, 1 John ii. 15.

Errors in the mind, false opinions of things contrary to the word of God; all unreasonable doubts, even in saints themselves; and all the actings of unbelief, which proceed from an evil heart, come under this sort of sins, internal ones, or sins of the heart. — 2. Sins of the lip, or of words, which are external, openly pronounced, whether respecting God or man, and one another; as all blasphemy of God, evil speaking of men, cursing and swearing, lying one to another; all obscene and unchaste words, every sort of corrupt communication; all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour and evil speaking; all foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient; yea every idle word comes into the account of sin, and will be brought to judgment; see Eph. iv. 25, &c.— 3. Outward actions of the life and conversation; a vain conversation, a course of sin, the garment spotted with the flesh, right eye and right hand-sins, and all that the members of the body are used as instruments in the commission of.

III. With respect to the parts of sin: they may be divided into sins of omission and sins of commission; when some things are left undone which should be done, and which are done when they ought not to be; such a distinction may be observed in the words of Christ, or however a foundation for it there is in them, Matt. xxiii. 23. and xxv. 42—44. and both these sorts of sins are very strongly expressed in Isai. xliv. 22—24. Sins of omission are against affirmative precepts, not doing what is commanded to be done; sins of commission are against negative precepts, doing what is forbidden to be done; see James iv. 17.

IV. Sin may be distinguished by the principle from whence it arises. Some sins arise from ignorance, as in the princes of the world, that crucified the Lord of life and glory; in the apostle Paul when unregenerate, in persecuting the saints, and doing many things contrary to the name of Jesus; and which he did ignorantly, and in unbelief; and in others who know not their master's will, and so do it not, and yet pass not uncorrected; especially whose ignorance is wilful and affected, who know not, nor will understand, but reject and despise the means of knowledge, and say to God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; the sins of others are presumptuous ones, and are done wilfully, knowingly, and of choice, and who are worthy of many stripes; see Luke xii. 47, 48. Some sins are through infirmity of the flesh, the power of Satan's temptations, and the snares of the world, which men are betrayed into through the deceitfulness of sin, and are overtaken and overpowered at an unawares, and surprized into the commission of them; and which is the case oftentimes of the people of God.

V. Sins may be distinguished by the degrees of them into lesser and greater; for all sins are not equal, as the Stoics say; and some are more aggravated than others, with respect to the objects of them; as sins against God, are greater than those against men; violating of the first table of the law, greater than that of the second: and with respect to persons that commit them, and with respect to time and place when and where they are committed, with other circumstances; some are like motes in the eye, others as beams. Our Lord has taught us this distinction, not only in Matt. vii. 3—5. but when he says, *He that delivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin,* John xix. 11. And this appears from the different degrees of punishment of sin, which are allotted in proportion to it; so as our Lord speaks of some cities, where his doctrines were taught, and his miracles wrought, and repented not, that it would be *more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, than for* them, Matt. xi. 20—24. According to the laws of Draco, all sins were equal, and all were punished with the same capital punishment; the stealing of an apple, as the murder of a man. Hence it was said that Draco wrote his laws, not in ink, but in blood. Not such are the laws of God; nor such the nature of sin according to them.

VI. Sins may be distinguished by their adjuncts. As,—1. Into secret and open sins. Secret sins are such as are secretly committed, or sins of the heart; which none but God, and a man's own soul, are privy to; and some pass through it unnoticed and unobserved by the good man himself; and are opposed to presumptuous sins; which distinction may be observed in Psal. xix. 12, 13. Others are done openly, publicly, before the sun, and in sight of all, without fear or shame. Some men's sins go beforehand to judgment; they are notorious ones; condemned by all, before the judgment comes; and others more secretly committed, they follow after; for all will be brought into judgment, 1 Tim. v. 24. — 2. The papists distinguish sin into venial and mortal: which cannot be admitted without a limitation, or restriction; for though all sin is venial or pardonable, through the grace of God, and blood of Christ, and is pardoned thereby, excepting one, that will be hereafter mentioned; yet none are pardonable in their own nature; or are so small and trifling as to be undeserving of death, only of some lesser chastizement; for all sin is mortal, and deserving of death; *The wages of sin,* of any and every sin, without distinction of greater and lesser, *is death,* eternal death, as it must be; for *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them:* if, therefore, every breach of the law subjects to the curse of it, which is death, then every sin is mortal. Yet, — 3. Sin may be distinguished into remissible and irremissible. All the sins of God's people are remissible, and are actually remitted. God forgives them all their iniquities, and heals all their diseases, their spiritual maladies: and on the other hand, all the sins of reprobates, of abandoned sinners, that live and die in final impenitence and unbelief, are irremissible; *He that made them will not have mercy on them*, to forgive their sins; *And he that formed them will shew them no favour* that way, Isai. xxvii. 11. There is one sin which is commonly called, the unpardonable sin, which is the sin, or blasphemy, against the Holy Ghost; and of which, it is expressly said, that *it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come*, Matt. xii. 31. But not every sin against the Holy Ghost is here meant; every sin committed against God is committed against the Holy Ghost, as well as against the Father and the Son; he, with them, being the one God, against whom all sin is committed: nor is it a denial of his deity, and of his personality, though sins against him, yet they arise from ignorance of him, and are errors in judgment; and from which persons may be recovered, and repent of, and renounce: nor is a denial of the necessity of the operations of his grace on the souls of men, in order to their regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, this sin, for the same reasons: men may, and good men too, grieve the holy Spirit by their sins; yea, vex him, as the Israelites; and yet not sin the unpardonable sin: yea, a man may break all the Ten Commandments, and not sin the sin against the Holy Ghost; it is a sin not against the law, but against the gospel; it lies in the denial of the great and fundamental truth of the gospel, salvation by Jesus Christ, in all its branches; peace and pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness; and this after he has received the knowledge of this truth, under the illuminations, convictions, and demonstrations of the Spirit of God; and yet, through the instigation of Satan, and the wickedness of his own heart, knowingly, and wilfully, and maliciously denies this truth, and obstinately persists therein. So that as he never comes to repentance, he has no forgiveness, here nor hereafter. Not because the holy Spirit is superior to the other divine Persons; for they are equal: nor through any deficiency in the grace of God, or blood of Christ; but through the nature of the sin, which is diametrically opposite to the way of salvation, pardon, atonement, and justification; for these being denied to be by Christ, there can be no pardon; for another Jesus will never be sent, another Saviour will never be given; there will be no more shedding of blood, no more sacrifice, nor another sacrifice for sin; nor another righteousness wrought out and brought in. And, therefore, there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and indignation, to come on such persons

Upon all which it may be observed, from what a small beginning, as the sin of our first parents might seem to be, what great things have arisen; what a root of bitterness that was which has brought forth so much unwholesome and and pernicious fruit; such a vast number of sins, and of such an enormous size: what a virtue must there be in the blood of Christ, to cleanse from such sins as these, and all of them; and in his sacrifice to make atonement for them; and in his righteousness to justify from them! And how great is the superabounding grace of God, that where sin has thus abounded, grace should superabound!

OF THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

As to the punishment of original sin on those who, it may be thought, not to have added to it any actual sin and transgression, as infants, dying in infancy, shall be silent; at least, say little. Not that I doubt of the right of justice to punish that sin on Adam's descendants, who have not actually sinned after the imilitude of his transgression; since corporal death, a part of the punishment hreatened, does pass upon them, and they are born with a want of original ighteousness, a considerable branch of moral death; but if divine justice proceeds further, and inflicts eternal death, or everlasting punishment on them, I hink it must be in a more mild and gentle manner than what is inflicted on hose who have also been guilty of actual sins and transgressions; seeing, as here are degrees of punishment repecting them, as they are greater or lesser, Matt. xi. 20—24. so there must be a difference of the punishment of original sin, separately considered; and of that attended with numerous actual transgressions. Many unguarded expressions have been dropped, concerning the punishment of such infants, as before mentioned, which are not at all to the credit of Truth. Many conjectures have been made, and schemes formed, that are scarcely worth mentioning. Some have fancied that all such infants are ost; which seems to have something in it shocking, especially to parents. And others think they are all saved, through the electing grace of God, the redeeming blood of Christ, and the regeneration of the blessed Spirit; to which I am much rather inclined, than to the former: but think it best to leave it among the secret things that belong to God; who, we may be assured, cannot do an unjust thing, nor do any injury to any of his creatures; and who, as he is just in his nature, he is merciful in Christ.

In this article I have nothing to do with men as elect or non-elect; but as they are all the fallen race of Adam. The elect, as considered in Christ, the Head of the covenant of grace, are not subject, or liable, to any punishment, here or hereafter; There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: their afflictions are not punishments for sin; nor is corporal death inflicted on them as a penal evil; nor will any curse befal them in a future state. But my concern is with men considered in Adam, as the head of the covenant of works, and the representative of all mankind; as they sinned and fell in him, and were involved in the guilt of his sin; and as they are actual transgressors in themselves; and as they are chargeable with sin, according to the declaration, sanction, and tenor of the law; and considered as such, all mankind descending from Adam by ordinary generation, without any exception and distinction, are subject, obnoxious, and liable to punishment.

Punishment of sin, original and actual, may be considered as temporal and eternal; both in this life, and that which is to come. There is an everlasting punishment into which the wicked go after death; and there is a punishment in this life; *Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin?* Lam. iii. 37. that is, for punishment in the present state.

I. Temporal punishment, or punishment in this life, is due to sin; and is inflicted on account of it; and this is both inward and outward, or of soul and body.

1. Punishment inward, or of the soul, lies, — 1. In a loss of the image of God upon it; all have sinned and come short, or are deprived of the glory of God; that is, of the image of God, in which his glory on man lay; one principal part of which image was righteousness and holiness. This man is stripped of, and is become unrighteous; *There is none righteous, no not one*, Rom. iii. 10, 23. — 2. In a loss of the freedom of will, and of power to do good. Man has not lost the natural liberty of his will to things natural; but the moral liberty of his will to things moral; his will is not free to that which is good, only to that which is evil; and that liberty is no other than bondage. Man's free-will is a slave to his lusts; he is a home-born slave. Man has lost his power to do good; how to perform that he knows not; through the weakness of the flesh, or corrupt nature, he cannot do what the law requires; he cannot of himself think any thing; and, without the grace of God, cannot do any thing as it ought to be done; for he has no principle of life and motion in him to it; he is dead in trespasses and sins. — 3. In a loss of knowledge of divine things; his understanding is darkened with respect to them; he is darkness itself; he has lost his knowledge by sinning, instead of gaining more; There is none that understandeth, and seeks after God, and the knowledge of him. Spiritual things men cannot discern; to do good they have no knowledge; they know not, nor will they understand. And many, through an habitual course of sinning, become hardened; and God gives them up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart; to vile affections, and a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient; to strong delusions, to believe a lie; and to their own hearts lusts; and nothing worse can befal men than that. — 4. In a loss of communion with God. Adam sinned, and was drove out of Paradise, and was deprived of communion with God through the creatures; and all his sons are alienated from a life of fellowship with him: their sins separate between God and them; and, indeed, what communion can there be between light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness? the throne of iniquity, or where iniquity reigns, can have no fellowship with God, who commit sin as though they had a law to do it. — 5. In being destitute of hope, and subject to horror and black despair. The sinful soul of man is hopeless and helpless: men live without real hope of future happiness, and without God in the world; if their consciences are not lulled asleep, they are continually accusing of sin; the arrows of the Almighty stick in them; the poison of his wrath drinks up their spirits; and his terrors set themselves in array against them: having no view of pardon, peace, and righteousness by another, there is nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment;

ndignation, and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are due to every soul of man hat does evil, and to which he is liable; unless the grace of God prevents.

II. Outward punishments of the body, or what relate to the outward hings of life, are as follow: — 1. Loss of immortality of the body. Adam's ody was gifted with immortality; but sinning, he was stripped of it, and be-ame mortal, and so all his posterity are; which arises not from the constitution f their nature, and the appointment of God, barely, but from sin; *The body is ead*, or is become mortal, *because of sin*, Rom. viii. 10. and it is liable, on he same account, to various diseases; they all have their foundation in, and heir original from sin; God threatens men for it with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with extreme burning, Deut. xviii. 22. and these, with many others are inflicted on account of it. To one cured of a disease Christ said; *Go home, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee*, John v. 14. signifying, that his former disease came upon him for sin, and a worse would, should he continue in it. — 2. Labour of body, with toil, fatigue, and weariness, is another penal effect of sin. Though Adam dressed the garden of Eden, in his state of innocence, it was done without toil and fatigue; but when he had sinned, the earth was cursed for his sake, and brought forth thorns and thistles; and he was doomed to labour in it, to dig in it, to weed and purge it, to cultivate and manure it; and thereby to get and eat his bread in sorrow, and in the sweat of his brow. And this doom continues still in his posterity; man is born to labour as the sparks fly upward; so the word may be rendered, Job v. 7. The earth remains in such a state as requires cultivation, plowing, sowing, weeding, &c. in which men must work with their own hands, in a toilsome and laborious manner, or in other arts, to get bread for themselves and families, and have wherewith to give to others. And it may be observed, that the punishment pronounced on Eve, that her conception and sorrow should be multiplied; and that in sorrow she should bring forth children, is continued in her daughters; and it is remarked, that of all the creatures, none bring forth their young in so much pain as women; and hence some of the greatest calamities and distresses in life, are described and expressed by the pains of a woman in travail. — 3. Loss of dominion over the creatures, is another sort of punishment of sin. Adam had a grant of dominion over all the creatures, and these were in subjection to him. But by sin man lost his power over them; and many of them, instead of fearing and serving him, rebel against him, and are hurtful to him; he is afraid of coming near them, unless God makes peace with them for him, and preserves him from them; yea, the noisome beast is one of God's sore judgments with which he threatens to punish sinful men. — 4. The many distresses in person, in family, and in estate, are the penal effects of sin; the curses of the law, for the transgressions of it, come upon men, and on what they have; in the city, and in the field; in basket, and in store; in the fruit of their body, and of their land; in the increase of their kine, and flocks of sheep; when these are affected, and there is a failure in them, it is for sin. — 5. Public calamities are to be considered in this light, as punishments of sin; as the drowning of the old world; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; the captivities of the Jews; the destruction of other nations and cities; the devastations made by wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, &c. — 6. Last of all, as to outward temporal punishment, corporal death, which is the disunion of soul and body, is the just wages and demerit of sin; it was threatened in case of it, and it is inflicted for it; it came upon Adam, and it comes upon all his posterity; and sin is the cause of it; *The sting of death is sin;* sin gives it its destructive power and force, and makes it a penal evil.

II. There is an eternal punishment of sin, of the punishment of it in the world to come for ever. This takes place in part on wicked men as soon as soul and body are separated; their souls, during their separate state, until the resurrection, are in a state of punishment; the wicked rich man when he died, *in hell he lift up his eyes being in torment.* At the resurrection the bodies of wicked men will come forth from their graves, to the resurrection of damnation; when soul and body will be destroyed in hell, and punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of God, John v. 29. This punishment will be both of loss and sense; it will lie in an eternal separation from God, from any enjoyment of his favour, and fellowship with him; but such will have their eternal abode with devils and damned spirits; and in an everlasting sense of the wrath of God, which will be poured forth like fire; and both are expressed in that sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,* Matt. xxv. 41. Now this punishment is eternal; it is called everlasting punishment; everlasting destruction; everlasting fire; fire that is not quenched; the smoke of it ascends for ever and ever, Rev. xiv. 11. The reasons of the eternal duration of punishment for sin, are, because it is committed against an infinite and eternal being, and is objectively infinite, and requires infinite satisfaction; which a finite creature cannot give; and this not being given, punishment must proceed on *ad infinitum,* and so be eternal. Could satisfaction be made, punishment would cease; but no satisfaction can be made in hell by the sufferings of finite creatures; which, therefore, must be continued until the uttermost farthing is paid, or full satisfaction made, which can never be done. Besides, the wicked in the future state, will always continue sinning, and be more and more outrageous and desperate in their blasphemy and hatred of God; and therefore, as they will sin continually, it will be just that they be punished continually; to which may be added, that there will be no repentance for sin there, no pardon of it, no change of state; *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, &c.* Rev. xxii. 11. But of this more hereafter.

Now this punishment of sin, both temporal and eternal, is due to all the fallen race of Adam; to all descending from him by ordinary generation, without any distinction or exception, as they are considered in him, and transgressors of the righteous law of God. All equally sinned in him, and died in him;

all are made sinners by the imputation of his disobedience to them; the guilt of which sin, and of their own actual transgressions, they are chargeable with: the whole world is become guilty before God; and which guilt in his sight, and as pronounced by him according to his law, is an obligation to punishment: all the transgressors of the law, as all men are, stand cursed and condemned by it; nay, *by the offence of one*, of the one man Adam, *judgment came upon all men to condemnation*; so that all Adam's posterity are under a sentence of condemnation; and as considered in him, and in themselves, are subject, exposed, and liable to the above punishment; being all by nature children of wrath, one as well as another, deserving of it, and so liable to it; that is, to punishment: the reason why this punishment, to which all are subject, is not inflicted on some, is because of the suretyship-engagements of Christ for them, and his performance of those engagements; whereby he endured all that wrath and punishment due to their sins in their room and stead; and so delivered them from it, which otherwise they were exposed unto; the dawn of which distinguishing grace the next Part of this Work will open and display.

END OF VOL. I.

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